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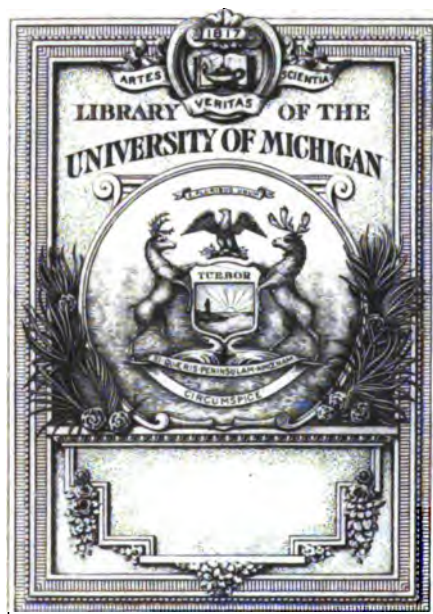
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NOTES

ON ALL THE

BOOKS OF SCRIPTURE,

FOR THE USE OF THE

PULPIT AND PRIVATE FAMILIES,

In 4 vols.
Vol. I.

BY JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, LL. D. F. R. S. &c.

*Si juxta apostolum Paulum Christus Dei virtus est,
Deique sapientia, et qui nescit scripturas nescit Dei
virtutem ejusque sapientiam, ignoratio scripturarum ig-
noratio Christi est.*

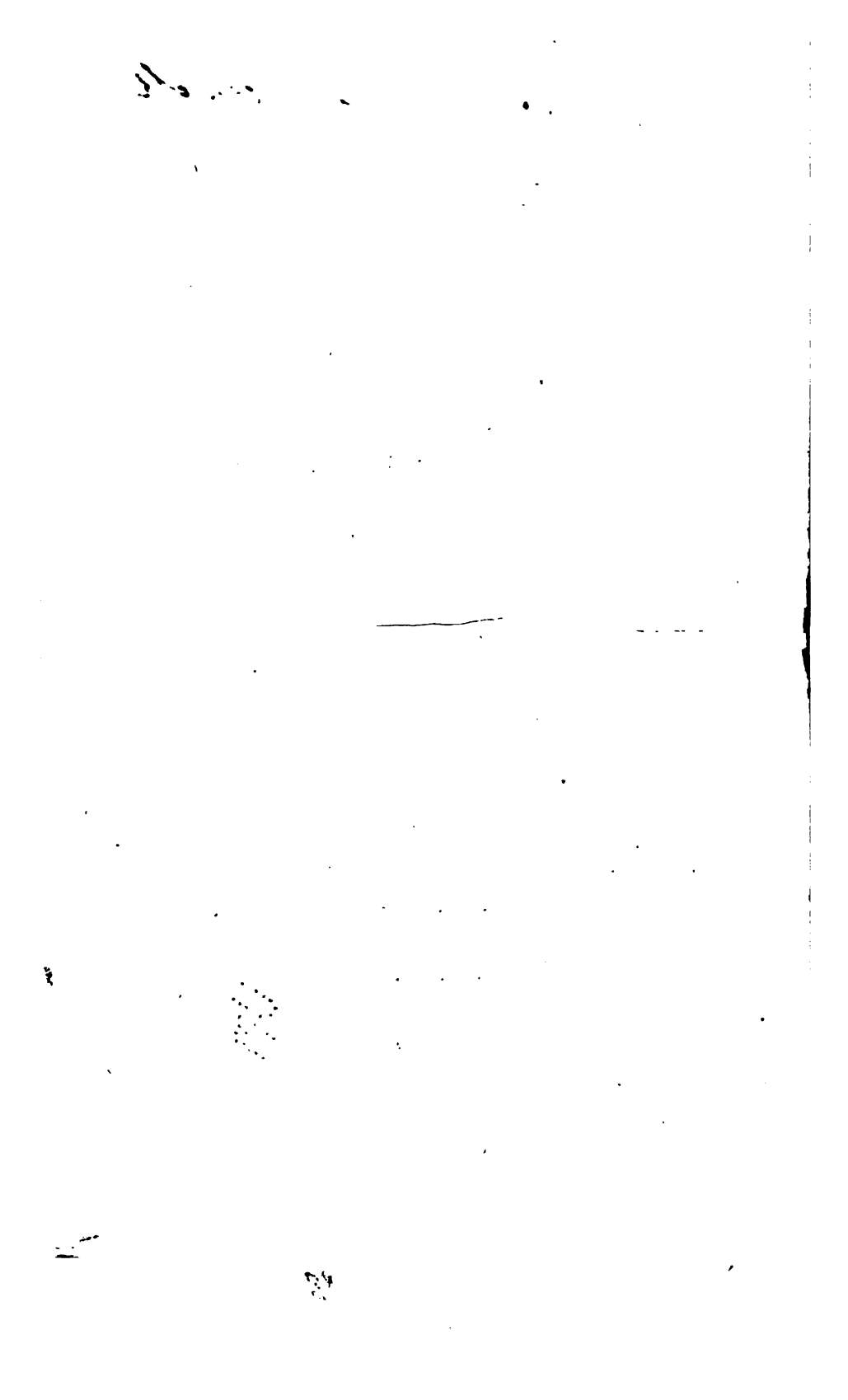
—JEROME IN ESAIAN—

NORTHUMBERLAND:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,

By ANDREW KENNEDY, *Franklin's Head*, QUEEN-STREET.

1803.



Gift

Tappan. Barb. Mass.

1-9-1933

THE DEDICATION.

TO WILLIAM RUSSEL, Esq.

AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CON-
GREGATION OF PROTESTANT DISSENTERS
OF THE NEW MEETING AT BIRMINGHAM.

MY CHRISTIAN FRIENDS,

REMOVED as I have long been from you, and to a distant part of the world, the idea of our happy connexion, which subsisted more than ten years, is always present with me, and the reflection upon it affords me peculiar satisfaction. My separation from you by ruffian violence, which received too much countenance from the general spirit of the times, and to appearance, from the government that should have protected us, is a subject of great regret; tho', together with all other evils that are permitted to take place

in the unfearchable ways of providence, we cannot doubt but that it will ultimately appear to have been productive of good.

To the will of the greateft and beft of Beings ~~it clearly behoves us to submit without repining ;~~ and our enemies, tho' on account of the unworthy motives by which they were actuated, they are by no means excufable, yet being confidered as the instruments in his hands, fhould be regarded with pity rather than resentment. By this time too, it may be prefumed that the moft inveterate of them are convinced of the unreafonablenefs of their conduct, and truly repent of it, which will intitle them to the forgivenefs of every christian.

It has been impoffible for me not to take an intereft in every thing that has befallen you fince my removal, and I rejoiced in your uncommonly flourifhing ftate prefently ~~after~~ your fufferings, through your noble fortitude, and the peculiarly ardent and valuable fervices of my fucceffors in the miniftry ; and I have lamented fome circumftances of an unfavourable nature, with refpect to which your fentiments have not been unanimous, tho' they have terminated without any ferialous inconvenience. Diffentions in christian churches, are, no doubt, greatly to be lamented, but they give occafion to the exercife of many christian virtues, efpecially thofe of meeknefs, forbearance, and
mutual

The DEDICATION.

mutual candour, in which I am confident you will not be deficient.

It was while I was with you that I first undertook the business of *expounding the scriptures* from the pulpit, and began with this view to compose the *Notes* of which the following publication consists; and therefore it is to you, and to shew my grateful remembrance of our happy connexion, that I take the liberty to dedicate them. Had it not been for the ready concurrence of the society, and the active co-operation of Mr Russell, and the other leading members of the congregation, who concurred with every proposal that I made, neither this course of *exposition*, nor the system of *catechetical lectures* to the young people, with the appointment of *elders* to assist me in it, or the establishment of your *congregational library*, could have been carried into execution. But by this means all my schemes for improving the discipline, and promoting the edification, of the society had the advantage of the fairest trial; and being found, in some good measure, to answer the valuable ends proposed by them, they have been adopted by other societies in different parts of the kingdom.

Happy will it be for the christian world in general when all christian societies shall adopt whatever promises to tend to their edification, and

vie with each other which shall set the best example to the rest ; not from a spirit of ambition, or vain glory, but simply to *provoke to love and to good works* ; each shepherd (as christian ministers are usually termed) feeding, according to the language of our Saviour, the lambs, as well as the sheep of their respective flocks, till the chief shepherd shall appear, when he will distinguish by his favour those who shall have distinguished themselves as his servants during his absence from us. As I have no expectation of seeing you any more in this life, may we so conduct ourselves in our separation from each other as to ~~secure a~~ *secure a* happy meeting in another.

I subscribe myself,

Your former pastor,

and at all times,

your christian friend,

JOSEPH PRIESTLEY.

The

The PREFACE.

THESE *Notes on the books of Scripture* I was led to compose as part of my ministerial duty at Birmingham, where I introduced the custom of *expounding the scriptures* from the pulpit, as distinct from *preaching*. There are many subjects within the compass of *religious knowledge* with which it behoves all christians to be acquainted, that cannot be conveniently introduced into discourses from particular texts ; and the amount of all the illustrations of scripture that could be given in this way would be very inconsiderable in the course of several years. But when large portions are read, and professedly expounded, nothing of importance to the right understanding of them will pass without notice. In this professed exposition circumstances in history, geography, and the customs of antient nations, &c. which it is desirable that all christians should be acquainted with, will of course come into view, and be explained more or less largely as the occasion shall require.

This exposition I gave at first *extempore* ; but finding that this part of the service was particularly attend-

ed to by my audience, I gave more attention to it myself, and composed my notes and observations with more care; and I soon perceived that this was the most acceptable, and generally thought to be the most useful, part of the service. And having been frequently requested to publish what I delivered in this manner, both by my own congregation, and several ministers for their use, I undertook to do it.

In this work I had made considerable progress when the riots at Birmingham put a period to my labours in that place, and destroyed a great part of what I had composed of these Notes, and had transcribed for the press. Not, however, discouraged by this circumstance, I resumed the same service at Hackney; and, as far as I could judge, with the same acceptance and advantage. And having abundant leisure since my settlement in this country, and having recomposed as well as I could the notes that were destroyed at the riots, I have completed the whole in the best manner that I have been capable of; urged both by my own liking to the work, and the frequent requests of my friends in England.

But tho' I have spared no pains to make this work as perfect as I could, too much must not be expected from it, because my plan does not comprehend every thing. If *critics* and *scholars* look into it for the solution of all such difficulties as *they* particularly wish to see discussed, they will be disappointed. These Notes will appear, from the account I have given of them, to have been composed for the use of *unlearned*, tho' liberal and intelligent, christians; for of such my congregations consisted. Nothing, however, which such persons are much

much interested to know I have passed without notice, whether I could explain the passages to my own satisfaction or not, and a few observations of a more critical nature I have added since ; but which, if any minister chuse to avail himself of my labour, he may omit, or change, as he shall think proper. The same may be done by those masters of families whose laudable custom it is to read portions of the scripture to their children and servants, and to those it is my wish more particularly to recommend what I have done.

My object in these *Notes* being originally the instruction of my hearers, as it is now of my readers, I collected from commentators, and every other quarter, all the illustrations of difficult passages that I could find ; and having no view to publication, I took no care to note my authorities. This, indeed, if the original and only proper authorities be meant, is now impossible, all succeeding commentators having without scruple borrowed from preceding ones. I have, however, not failed to mention the names of most late writers whose remarks appeared to be their own and valuable.

My custom was to note whatever appeared to me to be necessary for the illustration of that portion of scripture that I proposed to read, without consulting any commentator, and afterwards to look over such as were generally the most esteemed, as Patrick, Lowth, Whitby, Doddridge, &c. &c. to see whether I had omitted any thing that would suit me. But the far greater part of these *Notes* will be found to consist of such observations as I did not borrow from any writer, tho' many of them will be, no doubt, materially the same with those of others.

As

The PREFACE.

As my principal object in the exposition of the scriptures from the pulpit was to give my hearers what appeared to me to be the true meaning of what I read to them, I did not, in this part of the service, make many observations of a practical nature. To enforce the practice of moral duties I considered as the more particular province of *preaching*. Sometimes, however, this was unavoidable in the exposition. Accordingly some remarks of this kind, and such as appeared to be of particular importance, will occasionally occur.

The reader must not be offended if the same observations occur several times in the course of these Notes, as similar passages require them, and especially when their importance is very great. Without this the exposition of many passages would be exceedingly imperfect; and it would greatly perplex the reader to be referred from one part of the work to another, in order to the understanding of the passage before him.

Besides, the state of the times with respect to the most prominent subjects of general discussion, requires the more frequent mention of some topics than of others. A Protestant expositor, for example, writing about the time of the reformation from popery, would naturally take frequent opportunities of exposing the gross abuses in doctrine and discipline which had been introduced by the church of Rome, in order the more effectually to guard his hearers against the prevailing superstitions and errors. This, in a Protestant country is not now necessary.

For a similar reason writing, as I do, in an age in which there is great prevalence of infidelity, and in which

which the great majority of christians are trinitarians, I have been led to dwell more than I should otherwise have done on circumstances that are favourable to the *evidences of revelation*, and the doctrine of the *divine unity*. Had there been fewer unbelievers, and had christians in general been unitarians, this would not have been necessary.

In some cases observations in the form of *Notes* are not sufficient to give a clear and connected view of the meaning of the sacred writers. In these cases I have had recourse to a *paraphrase*, expressing what I take to have been the meaning of the writers in more modern and plainer language, but not always in more words. This I have done with respect to all the discourses of Jesus recorded in the Gospel of John, and many of the Epistles, in which the connexion between the different parts, and the force of the reasoning, is not always apparent.

The paraphrases on the discourses of Jesus are taken from my *Harmony of the Gospels*, and also the few notes that were subjoined to that work are inserted here, it being my intention to omit them in any future editions of it. In that part of this work I have not given the Notes on the four Gospels separately, but, after the example of Dr. Doddridge, in the order of my *Harmony*. A table will, however, be added, to direct to the place in which any passage in any of the Gospels may be found.

It will be perceived that I have given very particular attention to the circumstances which prove the genuineness and divine authority of the books of scripture

ture, especially those of the Old Testament, which are principally objected to by unbelievers, and which have appeared the most difficult to intelligent christians ; some of whom have been ready to reject them altogether, and the religion they contain, while they profess their belief of christianity. But the divine mission of Moses and that of Jesus are inseparably connected, and the religion of the Hebrews and that of the christians are parts of the same scheme ; so that the separation of them is absolutely impossible. That Dr. Geddes, and some others, should have been of a different opinion, appears to me most extraordinary.

Independently of this consideration, the evidences of the divine mission of Moses appear to me as clear as those of Jesus himself. And I cannot help thinking that the same must appear to every person who gives due attention to the state of the world in the time of Moses, and to the circumstances of the Israelitish nation in Egypt and in the wilderness. But these circumstances, remarkable as they are, seem to have been overlooked by all unbelievers. Judging of the state of things in that early age, and that remote country, by what they see at present, and in a very distant part of the world, they must necessarily form a wrong judgment. In particular they are disposed to think too favourably of the religion of those countries and times. Indeed the horrid and indecent rites of some of the ancient religions have been so long unpractised, that without the most decisive evidence of history, it would not at this day have been credible that human nature could ever have been so far depraved, and the human understanding

standing so greatly darkened, as that they could have taken place.

The accounts of the numerous modes of *divination*, as practised by the antient nations, are credible enough, because we see the same among ignorant people of all nations at this day; and we see that this miserable *superstition* is in proportion to *ignorance*. That the institutions of Moses should be intirely free from all cruel and indecent rites, and even from every mode of *divination*, and that in his writings every thing of this kind should be spoken of with the greatest abhorrence and contempt, is such an argument for the divine origin of these institutions as, I am confident, no person who duly attends to the *circumstances* of the case can withstand. For this purpose I have in a separate work, drawn a detailed comparison between the *Institutions of Moses*, and those of the *Hindoos*, the most respectable of all the antient nations; and to this I earnestly wish that learned unbelievers would give that attention which the case deserves. It is a consideration that strikes my mind with more force, the more I attend to it. That the Hebrew nation (generally, but very unjustly, reckoned *barbarous*) should have more knowledge in this respect than all other nations the most famed for wisdom and science, is what no unbeliever can account for.

Other objections, to the divine origin of the institutions of Moses, and the divine conduct of the Israelitish nation in their emancipation from Egypt, and their settlement in the land of Canaan, arise from an idea of the Supreme Being not suggested from any observations on the structure of the world, and the common course of events

events, but from an idea of him existing in their own imagination. They say it was unworthy of the Supreme Being to give directions about such minute particulars as occur in the construction of the ark and its furniture, the ceremonials of sacrifice, &c. &c. as Moses says he received from God. But can any thing be beneath the attention of that being who created flies, and innumerable insects and plants so small as not to be visible to the naked eye? It should also be considered, that to leave room for human discretion, in such things as those alluded to, would be to leave room for indiscretion also, and consequently superstition.

Also, could not the same Great Being, who both creates and destroys, in a thousand different ways, who is the author of pain as well of pleasure, and of evils of every kind as well as of good, effect the extirpation of a nation by the sword, as well as by famine or pestilence? Of what force, then, is that boasted objection to the order given to the Israelites to exterminate the idolatrous inhabitants of Canaan; especially when it is obvious that to do it in this particular manner, and by this particular nation, in all respects directed and conducted by himself, would answer an important end, not only to the world at large, but to that particular nation, which was set apart from all others for the express purpose of bearing a divine testimony against idolatry, and destined to lead all mankind to the acknowledgment and worship of the one true God? They were thus made the executioners of that very sentence which was denounced against themselves if they swerved from that worship.

Having

Having thus apostatized, their sufferings by the sword, especially that of the Romans, have eventually far exceeded all that they inflicted on the inhabitants of Canaan; and their expulsion from that promised land has been, and continues to be, for more complete than that of the Canaanites from the same country. Disobeying the orders they received, many of the idolatrous inhabitants of that country were spared, but the divine justice has not spared *them*; tho' according to the divine promise, a day of grace and favour yet remains for them. Who complains of their hard fate? And yet the Romans must have had as real a direction, tho' unknown to themselves, to exterminate the Jews, as the Israelites had to exterminate the Canaanites. It was the same Being the measures of whose providence required them both alike.

There is another consideration that we ought not to lose sight of when questions of this kind come before us, which is, that the Supreme Being, infinitely wise, and powerful, as well as good, is not to be restricted by such rules of conduct and morality as are adapted to such imperfect and short sighted creatures as we are. With the same object, and ultimate end, the means to obtain it may be very different.

We must not *do evil that good may come*, because we cannot know that the good we intend by it will come. But he who sees the end from the beginning, is continually producing good by means of evil, moral as well as natural. And what he does every day, in the course of his ordinary providence, he may surely do in that which we term extraordinary; when, for great and excellent

excellent purposes, the usual laws of nature are departed from, and, in order to make himself known, and attended to, miracles are occasionally introduced,

It is evident that without occasional interpositions of this kind the maker and sovereign disposer of all things would not be known, or acknowledged, by the great bulk of mankind. They see the sun rise and set every day, and all the revolutions of the seasons, summer and winter, seedtime and harvest, return in their proper time, and they derive unspeakable advantage from such a disposition of things, without ever reflecting on the hand that directs them, any more than the brutes that are incapable of such reflexion.

There are atheists even among those who with particular views study the works of creation, and who themselves discover the most wonderful and beneficial tendencies in the structure and arrangement of this immense system of which they are a part. But because they do not themselves see any departure from general laws, they will not believe the evidence of history, that such departures ever have been, notwithstanding the excellent and obvious ends to be answered by them. What, then, must have been the state of mankind in general with respect to the knowledge of God, of religion, and consequently of morality too, without these interpositions? They must have lived as *without God in the world*, intirely thoughtless of his being, perfections and providence, and could not possibly have had any knowledge of a state after this. And without this knowledge, and the views, expectations, and conduct, depending upon it, they must have been in an exceedingly low and degraded

graded state, as much beneath that of christians, as the animal creation is below them. For, as I have shewn in a discourse on the subject, the extended views, and glorious expectations, of christians, arising from the knowledge of God, a constant respect to his providence, and to a future state, raise them as much above the rest of mankind as these are above the brutes. The true and enlightened friend of mankind, therefore, who wishes their advancement in the scale of intellectual and moral excellence, must be an advocate for revelation, the belief of which can alone gain his benevolent object.

As an old man, and one whose increasing infirmities admonish him that he cannot be far from that *bourne from which there is no return*, I hope I shall be excused if I take this opportunity of saying that, in these circumstances, the advantage arising from a firm belief in revelation, and consequently in a future state, is inexpressible; and by persons wholly immersed in the business of this life, and fascinated with its vain pursuits, and fleeting enjoyments, cannot be conceived, and will not be believed.

The nearer I am to death, the nearer I am continually thinking I am to the great scenes that will open to me after it, and, to my apprehension, *immediately* after it; when I shall receive from that Jesus, whose divine mission it has been one principal object with me to despise, and by whose precepts, I hope I may say, it has been my habitual endeavour to regulate all my conduct, (how imperfect soever has been my success) whatever new station I shall be thought qualified for in the reno-

ted world, and which I hope will not be less active, useful, and happy, than that which has been my lot in this:

I here, if I have this happiness, I shall meet all my pious friends and benefactors, whose characters and virtues I take pleasure in contemplating; and it has been my happiness to have had among those whom I call my friends, some of the first and fairest of human characters. Their good opinion and encouragement has always been more than a compensation for all the obloquy, and some more serious evils, to which I have occasionally been exposed. These, however, I now look back upon without any resentment with respect to men, and with gratitude to the sovereign disposer of all things, for the salutary discipline of which they have been a part. Without such discipline as this, tho' consisting of many things exceedingly unpleasant and distressing at the time, what would any man be? The best of us would be nothing more than spoiled children, unhappy in ourselves, and insufferable to others.

I have no idea of any greater happiness than such society as I have had, and such employments and pursuits as I have been occupied in here. Then, in particular, I shall hope to resume my investigation of the great system of which I am a part, with more advantage than I can at present; and seeing more of the creator in his works, feel such an increase of admiration and devotion, as our imperfect knowledge does not admit of at present. There all the evils, natural and moral, that are incident to the present state, having answered the excellent purpose of discipline, and forming the mind to true excellence, will be done away.

T

To return from this digression (for such, tho' insensibly led into it, I must allow it to be) to the proper articles of a Preface, I shall observe that, these Notes are adapted to the common English version of the Bible, because it is the only one that is generally read in the pulpit, or in private families; but I have noted some of the more considerable improvements that have been made by more modern translators, especially when they are authorised by the more antient versions. To have done this universally would have been to give a new translation of the whole, and have swelled these Notes to an immoderate size.

Since, however, there is no probability that a new translation of the scriptures will be undertaken by the authority of the English government (and, in this country it might not be the more respected on that account) it is to be wished that the most generally approved of the *modern versions* were printed uniformly together, as a common Bible, to be used by those who approved of it. These new translations of the separate books may, indeed be purchased, and used by those who prefer them; but the publications are expensive, and accompanied with numerous critical notes, of no use to the common reader.

I wish some intelligent bookseller would take this hint, as it could not fail to answer his purpose, as well as that of the public. In a new edition, of such a publication as this advantage may be taken of later and better versions, if any such should in the mean time be produced, and by this means it would be a work continually improving with the increase of biblical knowledge

ledge. And no material inconvenience could ever arise from this circumstance ; since in every translation the general sense will, no doubt, be the same, tho' some will be more critically exact than others.

If any writings can be said to authenticate themselves, by internal marks of their being written by the persons whose names they bear, and at the time to which their contents refer, they are the books of scripture. It is not possible for any person of tolerable judgment in such things, to read them with due attention and not acknowledge *this* ; whatever may be his opinion of them in other respects. There are, however, in all these books such genuine marks of integrity and piety as must satisfy any reasonable person that ~~no~~ imposition, or deception of any kind (if in their circumstances it had been possible, which it evidently was not) was intended by the writers. They relate nothing but what they knew, or believed to be true, and situated as they were, they could not have been deceived themselves ; so that without external evidence (which, however, is abundant) all persons who feel as they felt with respect to God and man cannot help receiving their testimony to the most wonderful of the facts they relate without hesitation. Writing from the heart, they write to the hearts of all persons whose characters resemble their own.

My opinion of the superior excellence and importance of the books of scripture I have expressed in my *Answer to Mr. Paine*, who spoke of them with peculiar abhorrence and contempt ; and with this quotation from myself I shall conclude this preface.

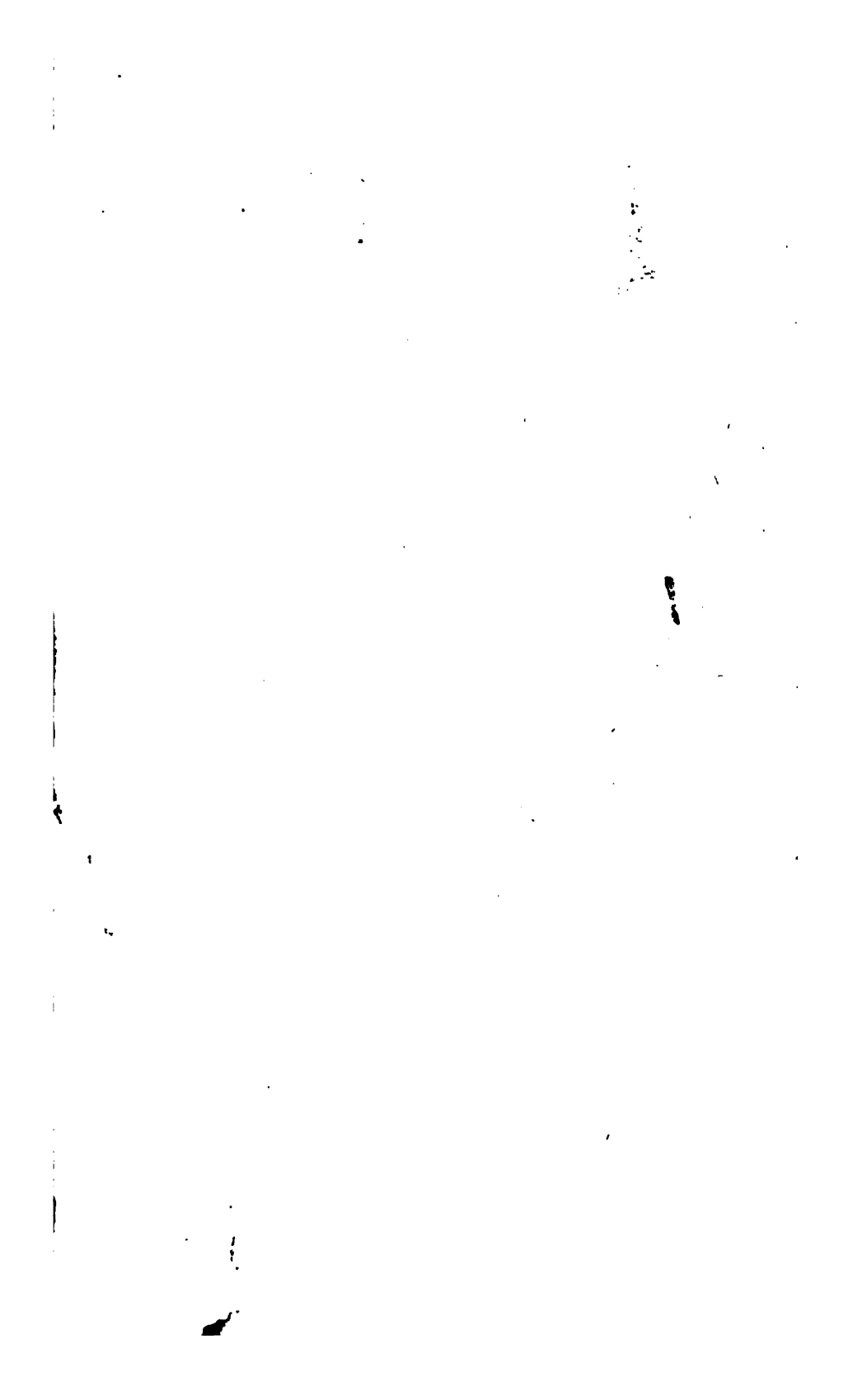
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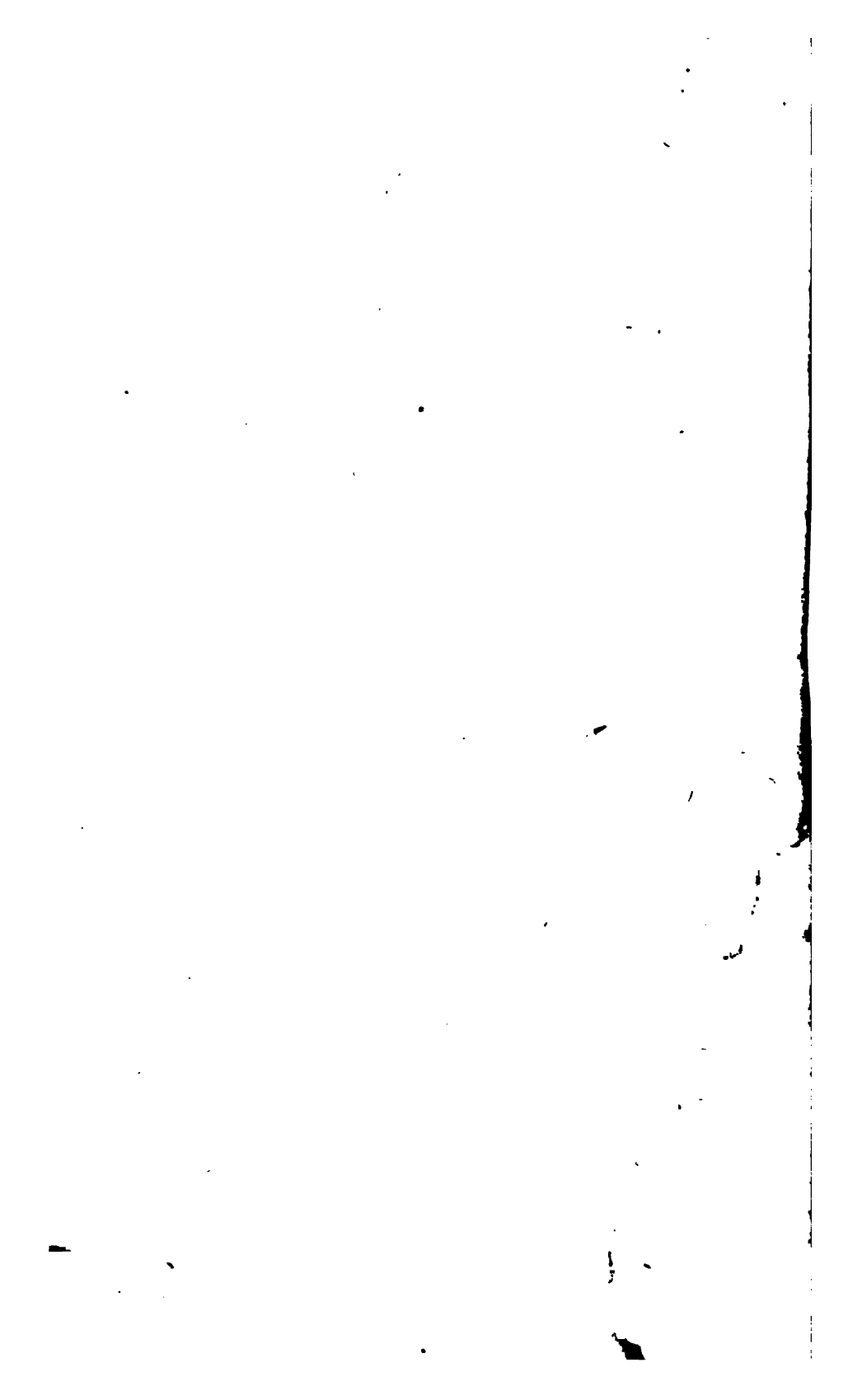
“The probability is that I am much better acquainted with the Bible than Mr. Paine ; and I can truly say that I read it with increasing satisfaction, and I hope with much advantage in a moral respect. It consists of books relating to the most important of all subjects. There are in them the most unequivocal marks of the most exalted piety, and the purest benevolence of the writers ; so that the perusal of them cannot fail to warm the heart by exciting the same generous sentiments, with every thing that is truly great and excellent in man.”

N. B. When the last volume is printed, I shall give an explanation of all the *Capital letters* subjoined to some of the Notes, especially those relating to the new versions, &c. and also a more particular account of the books that I have not quoted at full length.

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GENESIS.

I SEE no reason to entertain a doubt of Moses being the writer of the first five books of the Old Testament. It was the belief of all Jews and christians till of late years ; and all that is alleged against this opinion is *the insertion of certain passages in which mention is made of events subsequent to the time of Moses.* But they are all of such a nature as may well be supposed to have been added afterwards ; being by no means necessary to the narration, and generally interrupting it. And this was a circumstance almost unavoidable in such a case as this, and that of other ancient writings, to which notes expressing the different state of things in after times would be very useful ; and being first written in the margin, they would in time be incorporated with the text.

Moses lived sufficiently near to the origin of the human race, to be able to preserve a very probable account of every transaction that he has related, even supposing that he had no authority besides tradition. But it is probable that long before his time there were methods of preserving the knowledge of things, especially of names and numbers, by means of writing. He does

not speak of the art of writing as a new thing, but rather as what must have been well known, in his own time, and therefore probably in use long before; and the names and ages of the patriarchs before and after the flood at the time of their having children, and of their deaths, which are delivered not in whole numbers, but in the most definite manner, as also the notes of time in the circumstances of the deluge, could not have been preserved without some assistance of this kind. Exclusive however, of these numbers and names, the events are not so many, or so complicated, but that they might have been transmitted with sufficient exactness by tradition. And while the history of the human race lay in a small compass, and comprized ~~events~~ of great importance, highly interesting to all men, it could not fail to be often recited, and remembered by them all.

The first of these books, called *Genesis*, from its containing an account of the origin of things, is a book of the greatest curiosity and importance. The history of Adam in paradise is, no doubt, less to be depended upon than the account of transactions nearer to the time of Moses, and has something in it that has the air of fable. But notwithstanding this, it is infinitely more rational than any account of the primitive state of man in any heathen writer.

Ch. 1. The heathens in general looked no higher for the origin of things than the earth, and the visible parts of nature; and these were the objects of their worship. In opposition probably to them, Moses begins with asserting the existence of a Being who created all those things, and who is, of course, the sovereign disposer of them.

them. The phrase *in the beginning* must mean before they existed; if creation means, a creation out of nothing. If it means, as it sometimes does, their present constitution, *in the beginning* will be, before that constitution was formed, and the present appearances took place; so that the earth might have existed in some other form long before.

2. According to Moses, the original state of the earth was perfectly fluid; and such it must have been in order that, by its rotation upon its axis, it should acquire the form of an oblate spheroid, which it now has. The phrase *spirit of God*, or *wind of God* may signify nothing more than a strong wind. So the phrase *mountains of God* means *high mountains*, *cedars of God* lofty cedars, &c. As in that primitive state of the earth there would be no hills to check the current of the air, its motion would be uniformly from East to West, as it is on the pacific ocean; and meeting with no obstruction, it would then be much stronger than it is at present. The darkness was probably occasioned by the thickness of the atmosphere, before it had acquired its present transparency.

It is probable that this account of the progress of the creation is a history of *appearances*, such as would have been given by a person who had seen the whole, but was ignorant of the *causes* of what he saw; and the sacred writers always ascribe the operation of natural causes to the immediate agency of the deity. But as neither Adam, nor any other man, could know what had passed before his creation, and he must have received much instruction from his maker, it is not improbable that this

general account of the work of the five first days was communicated to him by revelation. It is evidently delivered not as from conjecture, but as from *authority*, tho' the manner in which the communication was made is not mentioned. What are here called *days*, may mean any periods of time, and even of a long duration, in which many of the changes that are here described might take place according to the present laws of nature, tho' these cannot be any thing more than the particular modes of the divine agency.

5. When the atmosphere had acquired its due transparency, the light would appear as in foggy or cloudy weather; and this might have been a long time before the sun, and other heavenly bodies from which the light proceeded, would be visible.

8. What our translators render *firmament*, signifies only an *expanse*, or *space*, separating the clouds that are above it, or in the higher regions of it, from the sea that is below it. This we call the *atmosphere*. But it likewise included all the space that is above the earth, even that which is occupied by the sun, moon, and stars, and what is called *heaven*, the supposed residence of the deity.

10. Supposing the whole mass of the earth to be in a fluid state, consisting of all the elements of which it is composed, the operation of the laws of chemical affinity would, in a course of time, form solid masses, in regular concentric strata. After this subterraneous fires producing volcano's, would break these strata, some of the fragments being elevated, and others subsiding, with the various degrees of inclination to the horizon which they

they are now observed to have. Thus, also, the inequalities which make the sea and the dry land would take place, the water occupying the lowest place.

12. As soon as there was a proper soil for the growth of vegetables they were formed; but this must have been by the act of infinite wisdom in the formation of every different plant, and adapting it to its situation; the doctrine of equivocal or spontaneous generation, which was maintained by the antient heathens, being altogether unphilosophical and absurd.

13. When the atmosphere was completely transparent, and the clouds dispersed, the sun and other heavenly bodies could be seen, and would appear to be then created, *tho' they had existed before.*

22. The creation of the fishes and sea insects, must have been by an exertion of divine power, as well as that of the plants. Why they were not created before or why the fowls should be formed before the land animals, does not appear. It would perhaps be some time before the waters were sufficiently transparent for the accommodation of fishes.

25. It is highly probable that the creation of animals took place at different periods, that of the carnivorous, for example, long after the world was stocked with those of the graminivorous kind. For otherwise if only one pair of each (as it is most probable) was created of the latter kind, those of the former would soon have devoured them, and then have perished themselves. All birds of prey, fishes, and many kinds of insects, must, for the same reason, have been created long after that of those on which they prey. If, therefore, creation was

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a work of time, it is not improbable, as Mr. Kirwan has suggested; that it may have been carried on in periods subsequent to the deluge; and that America, which has many animals, as well as vegetables, peculiar to itself, may have been supplied with them as particular occasions made their creation seasonable with respect to the whole. This hypothesis is the more pleasing to a pious mind, as it gives us an idea of a constant attention being given by the great creator to the works of his hands, and of his constant agency in them, and likewise serves to make the supposition of occasional miracles not improbable. It also makes the account of the preservation of animals in the ark at the time of the deluge more probable, as there would be fewer to be preserved in it.

26. This phrase is equivalent to *I will now make man*, the writer ascribing to the Divine Being the style of a sovereign prince. The great prerogative of man is his being made in the image of God, which a writer in the Apocrypha (Wisd. ii. 23.) calls *an image of his own eternity*, man being designed to be immortal. But the great superiority of the intellectual faculties of man, and the dominion which by this means he possesses over the brute creation, bring him to a near resemblance to his maker, make him a proper subject of his moral government, and a fit heir of immortality, in preference to other creatures.

Because the word denoting God is in the plural number in the Hebrew language, tho' the verbs connected with it are singular, and such words are found in most languages, some have supposed, that it contains an allusion

son to the doctrine of the *trinity*. But if there had been any foundation for this it must have been so understood by Moses and the Jews. But no Jew, antient or modern, knew any thing of the doctrine of three persons in the god head. When the idea was started by Christians nothing could shock them more, and to this day it is the greatest objection that they, or the Mahometans, allege against Christianity.

31. It seems from this, that man was originally intended to live on vegetables only. But as no change was made in the structure of men's bodies after the flood, it is not probable that any change was made in the articles of their food. It might also have been inferred from this passage that no animal whatever was originally designed to prey on others. For nothing is here said to be given for meat to any *beast of the earth besides green herbs*. Otherwise this must have preceded the creation of carnivorous animals.

Ch. II. 1. As the creation was completed in six periods, whether days or longer portions of time, it pleased the Divine Being to appoint that the seventh day should be considered as sacred to him, probably with a view to call mankind to reflect on his power and providence in the creation, and to attend to the relation in which they stand to him as the creator, and sovereign disposer of all things; so that the world could not have been eternal, or a deity, an object of worship, as it was with the heathens in general.

Time appears to have been divided into periods of seven days by all antient nations, long before the age of Moses. Both the Egyptians and the Hindoos made

use of it. Those nations gave the names of the heavenly bodies to each of these days ; but this must have taken place in after times, when astronomy was studied.

6. No mention is made of rain till after the deluge: Before that a heavy dew might supply its place.

7. It is clear from this account of the formation of man, that when the body was formed, nothing was wanting but the faculty of *breathing*. Nothing is said of an immaterial soul as a necessary constituent part of man ; whereas, if it had been so, it must have been considered as of far more consequence than the body, which according to that system is nothing more than its habitation, or rather its prison, impeding the exertion of its powers. It is evident also, that in the idea of Moses whatever be the *living principle* in man there is the same in brute animals ; for the very same language is used with respect to both.

9. What these trees were, or whether there be not something of allegory in the account, it is in vain for us to conjecture. According to the literal account, the fruit of this tree contributed to make man immortal.

12. *Bdellium* probably signifies *pearls*, especially as the manna, which was white (Exod. xvi. 14. 31.) was of this colour. The *onyx* is commonly called *cornelian*. It was one of the precious stones in the high priest's breast plate.

14. The most probable account the situation of Paradise is that given by H. Reland, who supposes it to have been in Armenia, near the sources of the great rivers Euphrates, Tigris, Phasis, and Araxes. According to him, Pison was the Phasis, a river of Colchis, emptying
itself

itself into the Euxine sea, and where is a city called in Greek Chabala the pronounciation of which is nearly the same with that of Havila, and this country was famous for its gold, whence the fable of the *golden fleece* attempted to be carried away by the heroes of Greece from that country. The Gihon he makes to be the Araxes, which runs into the Caspian sea, both the words having the same signification, viz. a *rapid motion*. The land of Cush, which was washed by this river, he supposes to be the country of the *Cussai* of the ancients. The Hiddekel all agree to be the Tigris, and the other river Phrat to be the Euphrates. All these rivers rise in the same tract of mountainous country, tho they do not rise from ~~one~~ ^{one} head, which might be a geographical mistake of Moses.

This paradise being called a *garden* gives us the idea of an inclosed spot of ground, and of no great extent. But all that we are to understand by this description is that the first human pair were placed in this part of the world, which was well watered, where the climate was temperate and which abounded with every thing that was necessary for the support of life.

It is evident, however, to the slightest reflection, that besides the formation of man, he must have had much instruction given him, before he could have been able to provide for himself in the most favourable circumstances that can be imagined; and the probability is, that divine goodness was not content with teaching man what was barely necessary to his subsistence, but that he was inspired with a language, and had communicated to him the knowledge of his maker, and of a method of

expressing the homage that was due to him ; that the moral rules of life were explained to him, and that he was informed concerning a state of future retribution. For all these were necessary to him as a *rational being*, and what he could not have discovered of himself.

19. Considering how long time, many generations no doubt, would be necessary to man's acquiring any articulate speech, we must suppose that Adam was inspired with a language; and as all the names that occur in this part of the history have significant roots in the Hebrew, this language, or one similar to it, must have been the primitive language of mankind.

24. This was probably either a figurative representation of the near relation ~~that exists~~ between the male and female part of the human race, or a vision, in which it might be thus represented to Adam, in order to impress his mind more strongly with the idea of their near relation and equality to each other ; whereas it was the opinion of some heathen nations, that women had some different and inferior origin, that they were made merely to be subservient to man, and not, as we here learn, a *help meet for him*, or a rational associate.

Ch. III. 7. It is evident from the speedy fall of Adam and Eve that there was no difference between the moral constitution of their nature and that of ours, since temptation had the same power over them that it has over their posterity ; so that there is no foundation for the doctrine of the *corruption of human nature*. We are now as God first made man, with appetites and passions that may be indulged to excess, in which consists sin, and with reason to control them, tho' it is often too weak for the purpose

That

That Adam was our *federal head*, so that we are punishable for his offence, is a notion too absurd to need refutation.

8. It is not said in what manner the Divine Being manifested himself to Adam and Eve. If the phrase *walking* is to be understood literally, it was probably in a human form, as he appeared to Abraham afterwards. While there was no danger of idolatry, no inconvenience would arise from the Divine Being manifesting himself in any particular form. His almighty power, and universal knowledge, were all that was necessary to be known concerning him. Children first of all conceive of God as a man living above the clouds, and seeing all that is done *on the earth*, and by this their minds are very usefully impressed.

15. If serpents were originally made as they now are, and crept on the ground, all the mischief they could naturally do to man would be to bite his feet, or legs, while the man could kill them by treading on their heads. The author of this tradition must have supposed that serpents were originally formed in some different manner.

17. In the idea of Moses man would not have been subject to death, if Adam had not eaten of this tree. Perhaps he thought that they would all have been translated, as Enoch was, without dying. For in order to provide for a succession of individuals, there must have been some method of removing some to make room for others, and a succession is necessary to the improvement of the species; prejudices remaining long with the old, and seldom giving way to reason, except with the young.

21. Accor-

21. According to this account the serpent had originally the faculty of speech, did not creep on the ground, and fed on the dust, which are certainly very improbable, tho' they might be popular notions. Also women would not have been subject to any pain in child birth; thorns and briars did not exist to obstruct cultivation, and man might have subsisted without labour, as well not be subject to death. But since the whole frame of man, and the constitution of the world, must then have been, in many other respects, very different from what they now are, these suppositions are exceedingly improbable. The history must, therefore, either be an attempt, in the way of fable or allegory, to account for the origin of evil, or be a ~~figurative representation~~ of some truth which we must now despair of finding out.

24. In the Jerusalem Targum this is rendered, *and he thrust out the man, and caused the glory of his presence to dwell of old at the East of the garden of Eden, above the two cherubims.* And in the Targum of Jonathan there is the same sense, but it is *between the two cherubims, and a flame of fire unfolding itself to keep, or preserve, the way of the tree of life*; implying that in this place the Divine Being manifested his presence, and accepted the offerings of men. This seems to have been the opinion of the author of the book of Wisdom, Ch. ix. 8. And it seems probable that there was some established method of consulting the divine oracle before the time of Moses from the application that Rachel made to it, and the answer that she received. And from some place called *the presence of God*, Cain was expelled. What was meant by the *Cherubin*

his was, no doubt, well understood in the time of Moses, tho' there is much uncertainty about them at present: They were emblematical figures, composed of parts of different animals, and not resembling any one of them. As they always accompanied the divine presence they might either represent his attributes, or the attending angels.

Ch IV. 3 There seems to have been some established mode of worship to which Cain and Abel conformed, and this worship was of the nature of a *precept*, by way of homage to the Supreme Being, on whom they depended for every thing that they enjoyed. This idea is universally prevalent in the East, tho' unknown in the Western parts of the world. *Sacrifices*, whether they were originally enjoined by God, or not, come under this description; and as it would appear indecent to suffer any thing that was given to God, and of course alienated from the use of man, to lie and become putrid, it was natural to think of burning it; and the destruction of some things by lightning (which was always regarded as the more immediate act of God) might give men the idea of *that* being the manner in which God took them. But, on the whole, it seems most probable that men were instructed by the Divine Being himself in this method of worship, as well as taught many other things that were necessary to their subsistence and comfort.

Since animals must be killed, in order to be sacrificed, we should naturally infer from this transaction, that men had fed on animals as well as vegetables; the worshipper giving, as it were, to God, what he might have applied

applied to his own use. Adam being clothed with the skins of animals would also lead to the same conclusion, as well as the human constitution, which is equally adapted to both kinds of food. But perhaps a vegetable diet might be most favourable to longevity. There is a difficulty attending this subject that is not easily solved.

5. In what manner this acceptance was signified does not appear. It must have been by a visible token of some kind or other.

Why the offering of Abel was accepted in preference of that of Cain does not clearly appear. But as it said that Abel offered the *firstlings of his flock*, and the *fat* or the choicest of them, whereas it only said that Cain offered of the *fruit of the ground*, he might not have offered the choicest of his fruits, but the refuse of them. This seems to have been the opinion of the LXX, who render the passage thus, *Tho' thou hast done right in offering, yet as thou hast not done right in dividing, hast thou not sinned? Be quiet.*

7. In what sense a younger brother was subject to an elder, while the father was living, or indeed afterwards, is uncertain.

9. Cain must have had very imperfect ideas of the omniscience of the Divine Being, to speak to him in this manner.

14. Living without associates, and consequently without protectors, he might naturally dread the resentment of some of his brethren.

With a very small alteration this may be rendered, *And the Lord said unto him, not so whosoever, &c.*

15. What

15. What this token of security that was given to Cain was, it is in vain to offer any conjecture about.

16. The *presence of the Lord* must mean the place of the oracle, where they had been used to worship, and receive communications from God.

22. Society must have made great progress at this period, before the invention of both wind and stringed instruments of music, which imply a state of very advanced civilization. As the sons of Noah were, no doubt, acquainted with all the arts that were practised in the old world, many nations must have relapsed into a state of barbarism after the flood; having lost the knowledge of which their ancestors were possessed. This has evidently been the case with the inhabitants of North America, who, no doubt are descended from the more civilized nations of Asia. In the Ladrone islands Mr. Anson found some people who were even unacquainted with the use of fire.

24. Lameck seems to have killed a man in his own defence, and therefore he thought himself better intitled to protection than Cain.

25. It is not to be supposed that Adam had no child from the time of the birth to that of the death of Abel; for, had that been the case, of whom could Cain have been afraid. But the son that was born after this event was considered as more particularly given to supply his place.

26. This passage has been so variously interpreted by both ancients and moderns, that the true sense is very uncertain. It is not probable that idolatry had taken place in so early a period, especially as nothing is mentioned

sioned as the cause of the deluge afterwards, but that the earth was *filled with violence*, and that mankind had *corrupted their way*, or were abandoned to wickedness in general. The Chaldee paraphrast says that *then men ceased to call upon the name of the Lord*; meaning, no doubt, that they were generally profane and wicked. That this was the case in fact is evident from Noah only being found righteous before God when the deluge came. The family of Seth, as well as that of Cain, must have been very corrupt.

Ch. V. 1. This has the appearance of the beginning of a separate work, copied and adopted by Moses.

3. According to the LXX Adam lived *two hundred and thirty years and begat a son*. It is supposed with much probability that the lives of six of the patriarchs before the flood, and of seven after it, have been shortened with respect to the time that had elapsed before they had children, and that the true antient reading is preserved in the Samaritan copy and the LXX. The lessening these dates diminishes the time that intervenes between the creation and the christian æra, which it was the interest of the Jews to do. They had a tradition that the Messiah was to appear after five thousand years, and of this the christians took advantage; whereas, according to their new computation, the time for his appearance was not come.

There must have been some certain method of notation, and of recording the names of persons and dates before the flood. For otherwise so many names, and definite numbers, as are mentioned in this chapter, could not have been retained. That men should ever have lived

lived so long as is here represented, is by many thought to be highly improbable. But so different might be the state of things before the flood in other respects, that this extreme longevity might be natural. Our knowledge of the subject is too little either to object, or to answer objections. There are traditions in many countries of the age of man having once been a thousand years. It is mentioned by Hesiod, as having been the case in the second age of the world.

24. Enoch was probably a prophet, authorized to announce to man, the reality of another life after this, and he might be removed into it without dying, as an evidence of the truth of his doctrine. Not but that the same knowledge might have been communicated to Adam; but too little attention having been paid to it, a second communication might have been given on the subject. According to the Hebrew chronology, Adam must have died but a few years before the translation of Enoch; but according to the LXX, which makes each of these persons an hundred years older before they had children than the present Hebrew, he must have been dead many years before this event.

32. It is something remarkable that no mention should be made of Noah having any children besides these three when he had attained to the age of five hundred years. He might have had others who, conforming to the wickedness of the world in general, perished in the deluge.

Ch. VI. 2. The phrase *sons of God*, may mean magistrates, who abusing their power, seized upon women of the inferior classes. It is, however, said, that they took

them for *wives*, and not for the purpose of prostitution, to be afterwards abandoned.

But the more probable opinion is that the descendants of Seth, who had been distinguished by the appellation of *the sons of God*, from the time that it is said that *men began to be called by his name*, became degenerate by their connection with the impious descendants of Cain.

3. This cannot mean that the age of man in general should be one hundred and twenty years, for this never was the standard of human life at any time ; having fallen gradually from near a thousand to the present standard. The meaning probably was that the Divine Being would yet wait an hundred and twenty years before he would send the deluge ; and in that time, no doubt, Noah would not fail to warn men of their wickedness, and the calamity that it would bring upon them.

4. The offspring of these men of violence were more degenerate than their fathers ; and as the word which is here rendered *giants* does in other places signify men of uncommonly large stature, I do not see why it should not have the same signification here, tho' we are not able to assign any natural reason for it.

8. As a change of conduct in men is generally owing to a change in the state of their minds, the same is here ascribed to God, as are other affections of man. All that we can justly infer from it is that, tho' the Divine Being had hitherto shewn great favour to mankind, he now saw good reason for discontinuing it, and even for destroying the whole race of them. In order, however, to give a reason for it, and shew his respect for virtue,

virtue, he spared the righteous Noah, which would be a striking lesson of instruction to all mankind in future ages.

13. As nothing is here said of *idolatry*, but only of violence, and wickedness in general, we are by no means authorized to say that *idolatry* prevailed before the flood. Besides, had it been known to mankind in general that idolatrous practices had been in any measure the cause of so calamitous an event as the general deluge, the same practices would hardly have been resumed so soon afterwards. That the same *vices* should prevail in the world is not extraordinary, because they arise from the natural passions of men ; but the origin of *idolatry* must have been some merely speculative notion, tho' it led to vicious practices.

14. It is in vain to form any conjecture concerning the wood of which the ark was made, but it was probably the *cypress*. Its timber is proper for the building of ships, and not subject to rot. As to the disposition of the apartments within it, it was, no doubt, sufficient to contain all the animals which the Divine Being did not think proper to reproduce after the flood.

16. Instead of *window*, Dr. Geddes renders the Hebrew word in this place a *sloping deck*, or *roof*.

Ch. VII. 2. By *clean* beasts was probably meant those that were proper for the food of man, for that was the meaning of the phrase afterwards. It may therefore appear probable that man lived on animal as well as vegetable food before the flood ; and the reason why Noah was directed to take seven pairs of each of these might be that they might serve for food in the ark

as well as for sacrificing, and a better provision for their propagation afterwards.

4. It seems evident from this that the division of time into *seven days* was known to Noah. Why else should this rather than any other number be mentioned?

It appears that Noah was an hundred years in constructing the ark, and in this time he, no doubt, would not fail to forwarn mankind of the calamity that was coming upon them, tho' it was without any good effect.

11. From the notes of time, which are very particular in this history of the flood, it appears that the division of the year into twelve months, and of those months into thirty days each, was known to Noah, and therefore to the antediluvians.

That the breaking up of the fountains of the great deep was an eruption of water from the Southern ocean (tho' we are wholly ignorant of the cause of it, and therefore must refer it to the immediate finger of God) is pretty evident, as Mr. Kirwan observes from such animals as elephants and rhinoceroffes, which naturally belong to a warm climate, being found in great masses, mixed with marine substances, in Siberia; whereas no animals or other substances belonging to the northern regions are ever found in the southern climates. One rhinoceros was found uncorrupted. Had these animals died natural deaths, in their proper climate, their bodies would not have been found in such heaps. But that they were carried no farther northwards than Siberia, is evident from there being no remains of any animals besides those of whales found in the mountains of Greenland. *Geology*, p. 69.

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That this great rush of water was from the South, or South East, is farther evident from the South and South East sides of almost all great mountains, and ranges of mountains, being much steeper than their North or North West sides; as they necessarily would be if the force of a great body of water fell upon them in that direction. He observes farther, that the principal force of this current seems to have been between the 100 and 200 degrees of longitude from London, as the land within those degrees suffered more than those that are situated more to the East or West of it. p. 75.

17. We are not yet acquainted with any sufficient natural cause for such a deluge as this, since from the account it appears to have risen higher than the highest mountains that were known to Moses. It is possible, however, that when we shall know more than we now do of the structure, and natural history, of the earth, it may appear to have been an event within the course of nature, and only predicted by the Divine Being, and previously adapted to the moral state of the world. At present it must be regarded as an extraordinary interposition of divine providence; and then, the event being considered as miraculous, an enquiry concerning the source of the waters employed, or in what manner they were disposed of afterwards, is intirely superseded.

Ch. VIII. 4. There is little doubt but that Ararat is a mountain in Armenia, not far from the situation of Eden. The seventh month was about our April; the beginning of the year being in autumn. The tenth month will be July, and the first October

7. The raven being a bird that lives on carrion might find food where the dove could not.

14. Noah was in the ark a whole year and eleven days. These very particular notes of time sufficiently prove that there must have been some method of recording them, whether by alphabetical writing or in some other way.

21. *I will not curse the ground for man's sake, tho' the imagination of man's heart be evil from his youth.* GALE.

Here again the Divine Being is represented with the sentiments of men, who are more favourably disposed towards those who please them, and remit their anger ~~on that account~~.

Ch. IX. 4. This permission to eat animal food seems to imply that before this men had lived on vegetables only; and yet unless the whole œconomy of the human body had been changed, there appears no reason for a change in his food, and other circumstances mentioned before seem to imply that animal food had been used before.

The prohibition to eat blood, in which life is supposed to reside, seems to have been intended as an acknowledgment that God is the giver, and consequently the sovereign disposer, of life, and therefore that it was not lawful to take it without his permission. There follows an express order to take it even from man in case of murder, which had not been permitted before, Cain not having been punished in this manner, but only banished. Some suppose that the practice of eating the blood or the flesh of living animals, as is the custom in Abyssinia

Abyfinia, was forbidden in this place. But this does not seem to be a natural construction of the language.

17. It does not follow from this use of the rainbow that there had been no rain before the flood. The heavy rain of forty days which contributed to produce the flood is not mentioned as a new circumstance, except with respect to the long continuance of it. But the Divine Being was pleased to make use of this phenomenon, which always accompanies rain when the sun shines, to quiet the apprehensions of mankind, lest it should be the beginning of another deluge.

21. We cannot infer from this, that either the culture of the vine, or the art of making wine was unknown to the antediluvians. Noah's planting a vine yard rather implies the contrary, as he would probably do what he had been accustomed to do before.

22. The mere circumstance of a son's accidentally seeing his father in an indecent posture could not have been considered as any crime. He must have endeavoured to expose him, and to divert his brothers with the sight; and as the curse fell upon Canaan, one of the sons of Ham, it is not improbable, as some have supposed, that it was he who saw his grandfather in the situation that is mentioned, and informed his father of it.

This may mean his *grandson* Canaan, who first saw Noah, in the circumstances here mentioned.

24. What Noah here says was in the spirit of prophecy, no doubt from immediate inspiration; and it respected not the persons then living, but their remote posterity. And if there was a propriety in the general

order of providence, that there should be such a thing as servitude among men (and if it had not been so it could never have taken place) there was a greater propriety and use in its being the lot of an undutiful son, rather than that of one of the dutiful of Noah's sons. There are several other instances in the scripture history of men's remote descendants being gainers or losers by the behaviour of their ancestors. Such was the case of the Hebrew nation in general, who, in themselves considered, were not more deserving of particular favour than other nations, as is frequently observed. And the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, are said to have been punished not in their own persons, but in the tribes descended from them. ~~This curse~~ was confined to the descendants of Canaan, and did not extend to all those of Ham.

In this prophecy use is made of the signification of the names of the sons of Noah, *Canaan* signifying *depressed and abject*; *Shem* *renowned*, and *Japheth* *enlarged*. This prophecy of Noah has been remarkably fulfilled; many of the descendants of Ham, who peopled Africa, having been reduced to servitude. From Shem were descended Abraham and the Israelitish nation, destined to be the most illustrious of all others; and from Japheth all the northern parts of Asia, and the whole of Europe, received their inhabitants.

Dr. Geddes transposes the clause here referred to *Japheth he shall dwell in the tents of Shem*, and applies it to Shem, whose name is hereby alluded to in the prophecy concerning him, as was that of Japheth in what was said of him; and he renders it *May he dwell in tents of renown*. This seems a happy conjecture.

Ch.

Ch. X. To those who interest themselves in the early history of mankind, the contents of this chapter are peculiarly valuable. All the heathen writers were too late to give us any light into times so remote from their own. Here we have a distinct account of the origin of all the most considerable antient nations, and of the countries in which they were settled; tho' at this distance of time, there is considerable difficulty in the interpretation of some of the passages.

2. The descendants of Gomer are by Bochart placed in Phrygia, but I think it more probable that they were the Cimmerii, or Cimbri, the ancestors of the antient Gauls and Britons. Magog was probably the ancestor of the Scythians, Madai of the Medes, and Javan of the Ionians or Greeks. From Tubal probably came the Tibareni, and from Meshech the Moschi, near the black sea, now the Muscovites. Tiras is supposed to have peopled Thrace; and as the Trojans had allies in that country, they may have had the same origin.

3. Ashkenas is thought to have settled in Bythinia, where was a city called Ascania; and the neighbouring sea, the Euxine, formerly called the Axine, may have been so denominated from him. The posterity of Riphath, or Diphath (as it is written i. Chron. 1. 6.) probably inhabited Paphlagonia, and the people called Riphæi might be of this country. Togarmah probably settled in Capadocia, as we find the Trocmeni in that neighbourhood.

4. Eliphaz is thought to have settled in Peloponnesus, where was the city of Elis; or he may have been the ancestor of the Æolians. From Tarshish was perhaps

derived the name of the city Tartessus in Spain ; and Kittim is generally placed in Italy. In Latium there was a city called Cetia, and there was a river called Ceto near Cumæ. Both Latium and Kittim have the same signification, viz. *to hide*. The Dodanim (in i. Chron. 1. 7. Rhodanim) probably settled in France, where we find the river Rhodanus, and the coast adjacent to it Rhodanusia.

5. By *islands* we are to understand all countries divided from Palestine by the sea, tho' they were on the continent ; or the word may signify countries in general, whether they went to them by sea or not. The language made use of in this place seems to imply that the emigration of the sons of Noah was not made at random, but in an orderly manner, probably by divine direction.

6. The Cushites were settled on both sides of the Red Sea, some in Ethiopia, and others in Arabia. From Misraim Egypt, which is so called in scripture, was denominated. The descendants of Phut were settled in the western parts of Africa, where are found several names of places derived from that word. Canaan gave his name to the country afterwards occupied by the Israelites, especially the northernmost part of it.

According to Mr. Bruce, the Cushites were the same people that are now called *Shangalla*, inhabiting that part of Africa which is to the west of the Red sea, and also the opposite coast of Arabia. They lived chiefly in caves dug in the rocks. They were the inventers of letters, tho' now they are wholly illiterate. Spreading northwards they built Thebes in Egypt.

The

The descendants of Phut, Mr. Bruce says, were the same people that the Greeks called *Shepherds*. They had long hair and European features; but tho' they had dark complexions, they were not Negroes, or Cushites. They lived in the plains, attending their numerous cattle, led a wandering life in moveable huts, and carried the Arabian and African commodities all over the continent. They still subsist by the same occupation, and never had any other. They were the carriers to the Cushites. They are now called *Balous*, *Berberi*, *Zilla*, and *Habab*, all which words signify *shepherds*. Their principal residence was the flat part of Africa between the northern tropic and the mountains of Abyssinia. The noblest and most warlike of all the shepherds were those that inhabited the mountains of *Habab*, a considerable ridge rising from the neighbourhood of Massuah and extending to Suakem, and who still dwell there. By degrees they established themselves through the whole province of Tigre, whose capital is Axum. *Travels*, p. 384.

The Agazi, or Ethiopian shepherds, he says, destroyed Thebes by Salatis before the time of Moses. It was the seat of the Cushite, or Egyptian kings, commencing with Menes. This dynasty of Shepherds was first put an end to by *Sesostria*, who called Thebes by the name of his father *Ammon No*. It is the same with *Diospolis*, which is on the other side of the river. The second conquest of Egypt by the shepherds was under Sabaco, in the reign of Hezekiah, who is said to have made peace with So king of Egypt, but this name only denoted his quality of shepherd. There was a third invasion of the shepherds after the building of Memphis, when Misphragmuthosis expelled them from Abaris, or Pelusium. *Ib.* p. 396.

7. Four Seba's, or Shebas, are mentioned in the scriptures, three in this place, and another the grandson of Abraham by Jocktan. They were all settled in different parts of Arabia. From this Seba, the son of Cush, a people called Jemanites are thought to be descended. A famous queen of that country was called Jemama, and the country is now called Yemen.

There were two Havilah's, one of them the son of Cush, and another of Jocktan, v. 9. The descendants of this Havilah were settled in Arabia Felix, towards Babylon; and by Pliny they are called Chevilaï. Sabta seems to have been settled on the Persian gulph, where there was a city called by Ptolemy Saphtha, and an island on the coast was called ~~Sephtha~~.

Raamah was also on the Persian gulph, where there was a city called Rhegana, in the Seventy Rhegma. Sabtecha is thought to have been settled in Carmania, where there is a river called Samydachus, and a city called Samydace; which, as *O* is in the Eastern language often changed into *m* may be derived from this name. This Sheba the son of Raamah was probably settled not far from Dedan, and near Regma, where there is a city called Dadan; and in this neighbourhood was a people called Sabæi.

10. There are different interpretations of this passage. It is most probable that Nimrod distinguished himself first by clearing the country of the wild beasts with which, before it was occupied by men, it would naturally be much infested, and afterwards extended his empire over men, and was the first who attained extensive dominions, building the cities here mentioned. The phrase *before the Lord* is only expressive of magnitude

magnitude, similar to many others that occur in scriptures; and Nimrod was so great that his name became proverbial. As he was the son of Chus, and might, therefore, be called *Bar Chus*, he may have been the same with *Bacchus*, who is said to have been a great conqueror in this part of the world.

Erech was probably the city which Ptolenny calls *Areca* upon the Tigris, and from him the neighbouring country might be called *Irak*. Achod might be the city called *Sacada*, a little below Nineveh; many antient names having *S* prefixed to them, as *Sardiæ* for *Ar-dixæ*, &c. *Chalæ* is called *Calno* in *Ezekiel*, and the country about it is called *Chalinitis* by *Pliny* and others. Its name was by *Pacorus* king of *Perfia* changed to *Ctesiphon*.

11. Proceeding northwards into *Affyria* (for so the passage may be rendered) Nimrod built Nineveh, from the name, it is thought, of his son *Ninus*; Nineveh signifying the habitation, or seat, of *Ninus*. *Rehoboth* was called *Birtha* on the west of the Tigris, at the mouth of the river *Lycus*. *Rehoboth* and *Birtha* both signifying the same thing, viz. *streets*. *Calah* was probably the chief city of the country called *Calachene*, about the source of the river *Lycus*, often mentioned by *Strabo*.

12. *Resen* was probably *Larissa*, which *Xenophon* describes as a very great city, its walls being an hundred feet high, twenty five broad, and eight miles in compass. The *Le*, which signifies *to*, might be mistaken by the Greeks for a part of the name, and of this there are other examples.

13. The

13. The Ludim were probably Ethiopians, and the Ananim the Nomades of Africa, living about Ammon and Nafamonites, called Ananim from Anain, which with the antient Egyptians signified *sheep*, on which they chiefly lived. The Lehabim were probably those whom Rhiny calls Libyægyptii, who lived to the west of Thebais, in a sandy and hot country, Lehabim signifying a *flame* and *heat*. The Naphthuhim probably lived on the shore of the Mediterranean sea in Marmorica. Since the Egyptians called the country, and mountains that lie on the sea, *Nephthun*, hence might come the name of *Neptune*, originally a Lybian deity.

14. The Pathrusim were the inhabitants of Pathros, probably Thebes in Egypt. Bishop Cumberland has given pretty satisfactory reasons for placing the Casluhim, from whom came the Philistins, in the eastern parts of lower Egypt; and for supposing that the city called Sin, and afterwards Pelusium, was called Caphthor, which properly signifies the *chapter*, or *head of a column*, from its being a place of principal importance on the entrance of Egypt, and that the people who kept, and defended it, were thence called *Caphthorim*, the same that were called Philistins when they left that situation, and settled in the neighbouring parts of Palestine, having dispossessed the Avim (probably some of the Hivites) who were there before them.

15. Sidon gave his name to the city so called, which was more antient than Tyre, which was built by some of its inhabitants. The Hittites settled in the southern parts of Palestine. From Arba, who was a Hittite, was descended

descended' Anak, whose posterity were of a gigantic stature. Numb. xiii, 22, 23, Joshua, xv. 13, 14.

16. The Jebusites were situated to the North of the Hittites, having Jerusalem, and holding it to the time of David. The Amorites from Emir occupied the mountainous parts of Palestine, and passing over Jordan, they dispossessed the Moabites and Ammonites of part of their country between the rivers Arnon and Jabboc. In memory of this conquest, some poet of Canaan composed a song, mentioned by Moses, Num. xxi. 27. There were some remains of the Gergashites about Gerasa, or Gadara, beyond Jordan.

17. The Hivites lived about mount Hermon, which being in the eastern parts of the land of Canaan, they were also called Kadmonites, or Orientals. Gen. xiv. 19. The Gibeonites, or Shechemites, were colonies from them, Josh. xi. 19. Gen. xxxiv. 2. The Arkites were thought to have inhabited mount Libanus, where there was a city called Arca or Arce. Not far from Arca there was a city called Sin, where the Sinites perhaps lived. But Bochart, with more probability, supposes the Sinites to have been settled at Pelusium; this word having the same signification with Sin.

18. The Arvadites were the same with the Araditi, possessed of the island Aradus on the coast of Phenicia; opposite to which was a place called Antaradus. A colony of these Arvadites were settled on the Persian gulph, and were skilful in navigation. Ezek. xxvi, --- v. 8.

The Zemarites, were probably the founders of the city of Zemarim, which fell to the lot of the tribe of Benjamin, Josh. xviii, 22. The Hamathites gave their

their name to Hamath, of which there were two, one of them afterwards called Antioch, and the other Epiphania. This latter is that which is often mentioned as *the border of Hamath*, being that city in Syria which bordered on Palestine. Eleven nations were descended from Canaan, but only five of them were devoted to destruction on account of their horrid idolatry, and their country given to the Israelites. The others were those who were possessed of part of Syria. The Perizzites must have sprung from some of these sons of Canaan, but from which of them does not appear.

19. The Samaritan copy differs considerably from the Hebrew in this place. It is, *The boundary of the Canaanites after the dispersion of their families, was from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates, and the hinder sea.* Lasha Bachart conjectures to be a city called by the Arabs Luza, which was in the midway between the Dead and the Red sea.

22. From Elam were descended the Elamites, whose metropolis was Elymais, and who are generally called Persians. From Ashur came the Assyrians. Arphaxad may have given his name to the country which Ptolemy calls Araphacitis, and which was part of Assyria. Lud gave his name to Lydia about the Meander; and from Aram came the Syrians, so called in the scriptures.

23. This Uz is thought to have been the founder of Damascus, the valley belonging to which is by the Arabs called Gaut, which according to the pronunciation of the Hebrew letters does not differ much from it. Hul, or Chul, probably peopled the country called Cholatene

Iobatene in Armenia, the names of many cities in this country beginning with *Chol*. From Gether perhaps Gadara, the chief city of Peræa might have its name. But some critics suppose Gether to have settled more to the North. Mash, called Mesech i. Chron: i. 17, resided probably in Mesopotamia, about mount Masius, from which flowed a river called Masca.

24. Salah is thought to have been the father of the Sufiani, their chief city, next to Sufa, being called Bela.

25. Peleg perhaps gave his name to the town on the Euphrates called Phalga, not far from the place where the river Chaboras runs into it. On this river was Charan, built by Haran the brother of Abraham. The great dispersion of the heads of families, which took place in the time of Peleg, was probably by divine direction.

Jocktan, or Jecktan, the Arabs consider as the proper founder of their nation. They call him Kahtan, and from him may have come the Catinata, a people in Arabia Felix mentioned by Ptolemy; and a city in the territory of Mecca still retains the name of Balfeth, Jecktan, or the seat of Jecktan.

26. Almodad may have given his name to a people called by Ptolemy Anumiatæ, in the middle of Arabia Felix. Sheleph may have been the father of the Salapeni in the neck of Arabia, not far from the source of the river Botrus. Hazarmaveth, called by the Arabians Hadramuth, is thought to have settled in that part of Arabia which abounded with spices. From Jerah perhaps came a nation called Jerachæi, who lived near the Red sea.

27. Hadoram seems to have fixed himself in the most remote corner of Arabia, towards the East, where was a nation called Dirmati, and the extreme promontory of this country is by the Greeks called Corodamon, by a transposition of the letters. Uzal is the name of a city in Yemen, in the south of Arabia Felix. Dicklah signifies a *palm*, or a *grove of palm trees*, and therefore the Minzei, a people in Arabia Felix which abounds with those trees, is conjectured to have been descended from him.

28. Obal may have crossed the Red sea into Arabia Troglodytica, where we meet with the name of Sinus Abalytes, and a nation with a name similar to it. Abimael might be the father of the Mali, or the Malite, a people in Arabia Felix next to the Minzei above mentioned. From this Sheba descended those Sabæans whose metropolis was upon a mountain called by the antients Seba, between the Minzei and the Catabanes. In a later period it was changed to Maraiba.

29. Ophir, I am inclined to think with Mr. Bruce, was settled in Africa to which he gave name, on the coast of the Mozambique. The Havilah here mentioned might give a name to a country called Chaulan, a part of Arabia Felix, near to the Sabians. Jobab was probably the founder of the Jobabites, mentioned by Ptolemny, near to the Sachalites.

30. Mefa, or Mufa, was a famous port of the Red sea in the West, and Sephar was the metropolis of a country at the foot of mount Climax, in the East of Arabia.

Ch.

Ch. XI. 2. The East in the scriptures respects Palestine, and as the ark rested in Armenia, the dispersion must have been from that quarter. Besides Ararat is a little to the East of Shinar, to which they were approaching.!

4. Babylon was afterwards built of those materials, viz. of bricks, probably baked in the sun; bitumen with which that country abounds, being used instead of mortar.

9. The object of this building was evidently to prevent that separation which the Divine Being intended, and had perhaps expressly ordered. It was, therefore, an act of disobedience, ~~but may~~ as far as appears, of idolatry, tho' this tower might afterwards serve for this purpose. It seems to have been intended for a centre of union, and for this purpose the builders of it must have agreed upon some form of government, and their dissention on this subject has been thought to be the cause of their separation.

In Joshua, ix. 2, the same word which is here rendered *one language*, is by our translators supposed to signify *agreement*. For there several nations are said to have fought against the Israelites *with one accord*.

But as the confusion of their language is opposed to their speaking *one language*, which enabled them to form this confederacy, it must, I think, mean their speaking different languages; and tho' this might have taken place in a course of time, from natural causes, the dispersion was too sudden for that to have been the occasion of it.

On the whole, it appears probable that there was a divine interposition, as it is sufficiently declared, in this business. And as men had before this time continued together, and of course had had much intercourse with one another, their mere separation from any cause of disagreement could only have produced new words, but not a new grammar, or new structures of the language; and yet Mr. Jones has shewn that there are traces of at least three radically different languages among men, the Arabic, the Hindoo, and the Tartarian. And if we take any of these, and consider the changes that have taken place in it in the course of several thousands of years, by people intirely separated from each other, we shall find it radically the same, and no such differences in it, as between any two of the three above mentioned. As, therefore, speech was, I doubt not, originally of divine inspiration, this change produced in it was probably effected in the same manner. But we may presume it was not carried farther than was necessary for that purpose; so that still there are in all languages many words in common, as we find to be the case.

Some suppose that it was only a part of mankind that were concerned in this building. But it evidently appears from the narration that the great majority at least were concerned in it. If a few of the more pious and better disposed were not there, living at a great distance, they might not be able to prevent what was resolved upon by the rest.

As it is probable that this Babel was that which was afterwards called Babylon, the high tower that Herodotus describes as existing in his time in the centre of that city

city might be this very antient structure, tho' perhaps improved. The pyramids of Egypt have lasted much longer than this; and tho' it was not built in a manner so solid as these, it might, no doubt, have continued till long after the time of Herodotus, if it had not been purposely demolished, for which there could hardly have been any sufficient reason.

10. In the Samaritan copy, and the version of the LXX, a hundred years are added to the lives of each of these patriarchs before they had their eldest sons, which adds much to the time that passed between the deluge and that of Abraham; and this better accounts for the origin of idolatry in that period. For we can hardly suppose that such an enormity could have taken place while Shem, and the other sons of Noah were living, as must have been the case according to the Hebrew copy; tho' living at a great distance, and being in years, they might not have so much influence, as we generally suppose they must have had.

13. Between Arphaxad and Salah there is the LXX and the gospel of Luke, *Cainan*; and yet, as it is not in the Samaritan, it may have been an interpolation; tho' it is much easier to suppose that a person who copied this genealogy should omit a name rather than insert one; because for this we cannot imagine any good reason, whereas mere inattention will naturally account for the other.

17. Some think the Hebrew nation had its name from this Heber. But as it does not appear that he was a person of any note, it is more probable that this appellation was given to Abraham and his family by the an-

tient inhabitants of the land of Canaan, among whom they settled, as having come to them from beyond the river Euphrates; for such is the meaning of the word.

26. It is probable that Abraham was the youngest of the sons of Terah and Haran the eldest, born, as we shall see according to the reading in the Hebrew, sixty years before Abraham. He had two daughters, but by different wives, each of them married to their brothers Abraham and Nahor.

28. Chaldea in Hebrew is *Chasdim*, and as this word contains the last letters of *Arphaxad*, this is thought by some to be the origin of that name. The people of Chaldea had this name before the time of Chesed the son of Nahor, Abraham's brother, from whom some suppose the Chaldeans to be derived. See Gen. xxii. 22.

29. Iscah must be the same with Sarah. She is called the sister of Abraham, and there is no other account of the parentage of Sarah, which we naturally expect from her relation to the Israelitish nation, as well as of the wives of Isaac and Jacob. Neither is there any farther account of this Iscah, and several other persons have two names in the scriptures.

31. It is probable that idolatry had its origin about this time in Chaldea; and that Abraham was on that account directed to leave that country, that he and his descendants might bear their testimony against it, and be the means of preserving in the world the knowledge and worship of the one true God. That Abraham himself and his family were idolaters is evident from what Joshua says, Ch xxiv. 2. *Your fathers dwelt on the other*

other side of the flood, in old time, even Terah the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor, and they served other Gods, v. 14. Now therefore, fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the Gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, chuse you this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell.

We find no trace of idolatry in the history of Abraham when he came into the land of Canaan, or in Egypt; whereas in the family of Laban, tho' the same with that of Abraham, there were *teraphim*, which were always used for superstitious and idolatrous purposes. The call of God to leave the idolatrous country of Chaldaea was given to Abraham, and it was by his persuasion that his father and other relatives accompanied him, and that his father would have gone with him to the land of Canaan, if he had not died at Haran, by the Greeks called Charraz, in Mesopotamia.

32. As Abraham was seventy five years old when his father died, his father must have been one hundred and thirty when he was born; so that his brother Haran was sixty years older than he. But in the Samaritan copy it is, *the days of Terah were an hundred and forty five years.* This removes many difficulties, particularly in vindicating what Stephen says (*Acts vii. 4*) of Terah dying before Abraham left Haran.

XII. 4. Tho' there cannot be a doubt but that all nations have already derived the greatest advantage

NOTES ON

from the posterity of Abraham, and will hereafter derive much more, the proper meaning of this phrase is that the prosperity of the nation descended from Abraham would be so great as to become *proverbial*, and his name would be used when persons wished happiness to each other. This is illustrated by the blessing of Jacob on the sons of Joseph, Gen. xlviii. 20. *And he blessed them that day, saying, In thee shall Israel bless saying, God make thee as Ephraim, and as Manasseh.*

6. Instead of the *plain of Moreh*, Dr. Geddes and others prefer the *turpentine tree of Moreh*. In the time of Josephus there was a tree of this kind about sixty furlongs from Hebron, which was supposed to have been coeval with the creation. It is probable, therefore, that there had always been trees of this kind in that place, as there were, and still are, cedars on Lebanon.

7. Abraham left his native country on the promise of God to provide for him elsewhere; but where that would be he was not then informed. On his arrival in the land of Canaan, whither he must have gone by divine direction, he was informed that *that* was the country that would be given to his posterity. In what manner the Divine Being made himself known to Abraham, does not appear; but he must, no doubt, have had sufficient evidence that the appearance was no illusion, and therefore it was probably some miracle, the only proper evidence of Divine interposition. Still his obedience [to the call of God is mentioned in the New Testament as an evidence of exemplary faith.

8. It

8. It is evident from the practice of Abraham, that there is nothing necessarily reprehensible in sacrificing upon eminences. The act would by this means be more public and conspicuous, without the idea of worshipping nearer to heaven, the supposed place of the divine residence.

11. It is computed that at this time Sarah was sixty years old ; but being much fairer than the Egyptians, as well as having more regular features, she might appear beautiful. And as the life of man was longer than at present, she would not seem older than women in general do with us at forty. It is rather extraordinary that Abraham, who had such good reason to believe himself under the particular care of the Divine Being, and who had left his country by his express order, should not confide in his protection in all events, while he was in the way of his duty. But no human characters are absolutely perfect. Tho' his great excellence was faith in God, in this case he appears to have been deficient in that virtue.

15. The name of *Pharaoh*, which Josephus says signifies *king*, continued to be applied to all the kings of Egypt till the Babylonish captivity. Sarah appears to have been taken into that part of Pharaoh's house which was appropriated to the women, with a view to make her one of his wives, or concubines.

17. Tho' he had not actually made her his wife or concubine, he had done wrong in taking her, probably without asking the consent of Abraham.

18. It does not appear that the Egyptians were at this time idolaters. It is evident, however, that Pharaoh stood in awe of the God of Abraham. Ch.

Ch. XIII. 9. It is evident from this, that the land of Canaan was at this time far from being fully peopled; since Abraham and Lot had their choice of places of residence, with full power to feed their numerous flocks where they pleased.

14. This was the third time of God's appearing to Abraham, to renew his promise of the country in which he then was.

18. Mamre was the name of a person of considerable eminence among the Amorites, as will be seen in the next chapter.

Ch. XIV. 1. *And it came to pass in those days that Amraphel, &c. Conj.*

It is supposed by some that the Canaanites had invaded and got possession of Palestine, contrary to the direction of God at the time of the general dispersion; and that the descendants of those to whom of right it belonged, and at the head of whom was Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, endeavoured by this war to recover their right. But the history is too short, and too ancient, to enable us to form any certain opinion about it. The kings here mentioned were probably all princes of small states or single cities, such as Joshua found in Palestine, which contained thirty one of them, and such as the Emirs are among the Arabs at this day.

Shinar was the country about Babylon, and the king was probably very powerful. There is a city called Ellas in Syria, on the border of Arabia, which was probably this Ellasar. Tidal is thought by some to have been the king of a city or country called Goim, or perhaps he was the prince of several tribes, inhabiting that part

part of Galilee which was afterwards called *Galilee of the Gentiles*, that being the signification of the word *Goim*, but on this subject antient history and antient geography throw no light.

3. Those five cities stood in the rich valley near the Dead sea.

5. The Rephaim were a warlike people, of gigantic stature, of the posterity of Canaan, inhabiting the country called Bashan. They must have been conquered by the other kings on their march to Sodom and Gomorrah. Ashteroth was a place in Bashan. Deut. 1, 4.

The Zuzim were another warlike nation in that neighbourhood, perhaps the same with the Zamzummins. The Emims appear from Deut. ix, 10, to have been a gigantic race of people in the neighbourhood of the Horites. They were expelled from that country by the Moabites, as the Horites were by the Edomites.

7. These are names of places that were given in times subsequent to these. The origin of those Amalekites is not known. Esau had a descendant of that name, but it is not probable that any nation besides those called Edomites was descended from him; and the Israelites were expressly forbidden to meddle with the country of the Edomites, much more to exterminate any part of them, which they were expressly ordered to do with respect to the Amalekites. They were probably of the descendants of Canaan. Hazezon Tamar was the same with Engaddi, near the sea of Sodom, 2 Chron. xx. 2.

10. These slime pits were probably holes out of which issued the bitumen which abounded in this valley,

ley, and which is still found in lumps on the surface of the Dead sea.

14. Abraham must have been exceedingly wealthy and powerful, to be able to retain such a number of men fit to bear arms. What was the amount of the whole force is not said. This Dan is thought to have been a place at the source of the river Jordan, and not the city that was afterwards so called from the tribe of Dan, part of which settled in that country.

15. Melchizedec was, no doubt, a prince, or chief, in this neighbourhood, but from whom he was descended is not said. Being a prince, he was also a priest, as in these antient times all kings were. Salem, where he reigned, was probably the same place with that which was mentioned in the gospel history, as being near the river Jordan, where John was baptizing.

19. This tythe which Abraham gave to Melchizedec, must have been a tenth part of the spoils recovered from the kings whom he had defeated; but why it was given to him does not appear. If he be considered as a priest, he was not so with respect to Abraham, or any other people than those over whom he reigned. Perhaps he might have been a sufferer by the incursion of those kings, and what was given him might be the amount of his loss.

22. When any person took an oath, he lifted up his right hand towards heaven by way of calling God to witness the truth of what was asserted.

23. This conduct of Abraham, was, no doubt, generous, in refusing any recompence for the service he had rendered to the king of Sodom; but it implies a suspicion
of

of a want of generosity in the king. And a mere indemnification for his services could not, with any shew of reason, have been said to make him rich. Perhaps Abraham's knowledge of the disposition of this king might authorize him to treat him with so little delicacy.

Ch. XV. 1. *Thy reward shall be exceedingly great.*

Abraham might be apprehensive of the return of the kings (whom he and his friends had only defeated by surprizing them in the night) and with a force that he might not be able to withstand. And therefore an assurance from God that he would be protected might be peculiarly seasonable.

Abraham was now advancing in years as well as Sarah, and without children, and therefore it required a great exertion of faith in God to believe that his posterity would be distinguished in the manner that had been promised to him.

10. Martine, the learned Benedictine, thinks that this verse ought to be rendered, *And Abraham left the birds* (viz. the turtle dove and the pigeon) *upon the parts of the victim, and put them together.* This he shews to have been agreeable to the custom of antient sacrifices.

12. What was this *horror of great darkness* that fell upon Abraham does not appear. Nothing is said of its being removed, and yet he must have been in the perfect possession of himself to have attended to this important communication.

13. The Israelites were not in Egypt four hundred years, but only about half that time ; but their deliverance

ance was very nearly four hundred years from the time of this prediction. In Ex. xii. 40, their sojourning is said to have been four hundred and thirty years; but this must be reckoned from the time of Abraham's arrival in the land of Canaan, where he was twenty five years before the birth of Isaac; and this number added to the four hundred and five years, which intervened between the birth of Isaac and their deliverance from Egypt, makes up the number four hundred and thirty.

16. The Divine Being chose to make it apparent to all the world, that the expulsion of the Amorites and other inhabitants of Canaan was on account of their idolatry and wickedness; and therefore it was deferred till they were risen to a more conspicuous height than they had reached at that time.

17. In making solemn engagements, it was the custom of the contracting parties to walk between the parts of the victims that were sacrificed on the occasion. The lamp of fire was probably the symbol of the Divine presence.

19. Who these Kenites and Kenezites were, does not appear. They were probably extinct before the time of Joshua, as they are not mentioned in his history. The Kenites mentioned here could not be the same people that are so called afterwards; for they were the descendants of Jethro, and continued to live with the Israelites. The Cadmonites are only mentioned in this place. It is thought they were Hivites that lived near mount Hermon, towards the eastern parts of Palestine. It does not appear from which of the sons of Canaan the Perizzites were descended. The
word

word signifies *villagers*, and they appear from Josh. xi. 3, xvii. 13, to have lived in the mountainous and woody parts of the country, probably without any considerable cities, and therefore might consist of various tribes who chose that mode of life.

21. As *Canaanites* signifies *merchants*, it is probable that those of the posterity of Canaan who applied to commerce, and inhabited the sea coast, had this name appropriated to them, from which soever of the sons of Canaan they were descended.

Ch. XVI. 3. Notwithstanding the promise of God, that the posterity of Abraham would be a great nation, and possess the land of Canaan, no promise had been made in favour of Sarah; and therefore, despairing of having any child herself, she, according to the allowed custom of the times, wished to have one that she might call her's by a favourite slave; and polygamy was always practised in the East. There is also in the East a difference of rank, and of privileges, among wives. Hagar was the slave of Sarah, and at her disposal, tho' the concubine or wife of Abraham.

5. This looks as if Sarah thought that Abraham encouraged Hagar in her insolence.

6. In reply to this Abraham says that, tho' she had, at her request, been made his concubine, she was still in her power: and on this, treating her with harshness, she fled.

7. She was flying into Egypt, her own country, the wilderness of Shur bordering upon it. Sarah had probably purchased her while Abraham resided there.

10. It

10. It is observable that many of the appearances that are called *angels* speak in the name of God, and were addressed, and conversed with, not as messengers from God, but as the Supreme Being himself. They must, therefore, have been supposed to be only temporary appearances, adapted to particular occasions, and not permanent beings distinct from God.

11. The word *Ishmael* signifies *God hears*.

12. Literally, *a wild ass of a man*. By *dwelling in the presence of all his brethren*, was probably meant that he should keep possession of the country assigned to him, and that it would not be in the power of any nation to dispossess him. And this prediction has been wonderfully verified. Of all the people on the face of the earth, the Arabs alone continue in the possession of their original country, and have never been conquered by any nation whatever, tho' they have been in the neighbourhood of all the great monarchies, the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman, all of whom had wars with them, and attempted their subjugation, as the Turks have since.

13. *Have I indeed seen the train (retinue) of him that provideth for me?* It is the same word that is rendered *attendants*, Ps. xiv. 14, and the *back parts*, viz. of the divine glory which Moses was permitted to see, Exod. xxxiii. 23. Whatever this was, the same was perhaps seen by Hagar.

16. He was seventy five when he came to the land of Canaan, and he had been ten years in the country when he took Hagar to wife; so that he was then eighty five years old, and therefore eighty six when Ishmael was born.

Ch:

Ch. XVII. 1. Abraham having a child by Hagar, and thirteen years being elapsed since his birth, while he was advanced to the age of ninety nine, and Sarah not much younger, he would naturally conclude that Ishmael was the son that the promise respected, especially as the name of Sarah had not been mentioned as the mother of the promised child.

5. Abram signifies *high father*, but Abraham *the father of a multitude*.

7. This is the first intimation of a peculiar relation between God and the posterity of Abraham, which was afterwards more fully explained and confirmed in the wilderness, after they had left Egypt. At this time several nations had their peculiar gods, under whose protection they imagined themselves to be. In order to distinguish the posterity of Abraham from other nations, the Supreme Being himself would be their God, and they were to acknowledge no other.

11. Whenever the Divine Being made what is called a *covenant* with any person, he fixed upon some sign, or token, of it, by the observance of which it might be brought to mind, and the obligation which it brought the parties under be confirmed. Thus the rainbow was made a sign of the covenant that God made with mankind after the deluge; and now this rite of circumcision, which relates to the posterity of Abraham, was made a sign of the covenant made with him. And it is evident, from the terms in which it is expressed, that both the covenant and the sign of it were to be perpetual, or to continue as long as the posterity of Abraham should be the favoured nation. But from all the subse-

quent prophecies it is evident that this is to be the case as long as the world continues. The obligation, therefore, on this nation to circumcise their children, must always be in force, and cannot be set aside without some express direction from God for that purpose ; and this has not been given.

It is equally evident from other circumstances, that all the essentials of the Jewish ritual are to be continued as long as the Jews are a people, and that sacrifices, and every thing else that is peculiar to their religion will be resumed whenever their restoration to their own country, and the consequent rebuilding of their temple, shall give them an opportunity to do this. In the mean time they can continue the rite of circumcision, and also observe their festivals, tho' not with all the forms prescribed by their law.

If the language used by the Divine Being on this occasion be exactly reported, it should seem that the meaning of the term *circumcision* must have been well known to Abraham, and consequently could not have been altogether new, tho' probably not in general use. To persons full grown, and especially to Abraham himself, who was then old, this must have been a painful operation ; but the pain which it occasions to a child of eight days old is inconsiderable, and the wound is soon healed. As to any inconvenience resulting from the operation afterwards, it is not found in fact to be any at all, as it is never complained of, tho' it might have been imagined *a priori*, that every part of the human body having its peculiar use, it could not have been parted with without some injury.

The'

Tho' circumcision was used by the Egyptian priests, and by some nations who learned the practice from them, there is no evidence of their using it prior to the time of Abraham, and on what principles they adopted it is uncertain. The Colchi are thought by Grotius to have been of the twelve tribes, and that on this account, and not because they were of Egyptian extraction, they practised the rite of circumcision.

It seems extraordinary that not only Abraham, but Ishmael, and even the slaves of Abraham, who had no interest whatever in the covenant of which it was the sign, were ordered to be circumcised. But according to the ideas and customs of the East, every thing belonging to any person must be affected as he is. Thus the king of Nineveh ordered not only his people, but even the cattle to put on mourning, when Jonah preached to the city. And for this reason I apprehend that the baptism of infants would appear to have great propriety to the primitive christians, tho' such infants could not have any knowledge of the religion to which it was the introduction, and as it were, the sign. It is, therefore, less necessary with us in the western parts of the world, who have no ideas, or customs, corresponding to the practice.

14. It is not easy to say what is the precise meaning of being *cut off from his people*. The most obvious sense is that he shall no longer be considered as one of the Israelitish nation, the peculiar people of God, but as of any other nation. This was probably the case of a Hebrew who should refuse to circumcise his children. But when the same phrase is applied to other offences of a

more heinous nature, it may be an intimation of some particular judgment from God awaiting him, or the punishment of death inflicted by the civil magistrate.

16. This is the first time that the promised seed is said to come from Sarah, and must, no doubt, have appeared extraordinary, considering her great age. The signification of the name *Sarai*, or that of *Sarah*, is not easily ascertained; but the reason that is here given for the change of the name leads us to suppose that the latter signifies something relating to fecundity, since it is said that she should be the mother of nations. Dr. Geddes supposes that her former name signified a *star*, that being the meaning of the word in the Syriac or Chaldaea language.

17. Laughter may arise from very different states of mind. Since Abraham was not reproved for laughing, there could not be any thing in it that was offensive, as in that of Sarah afterwards. His was probably the effect of admiration and joy, and not of incredulity.

18. The word *Isaac* signifies *laughter*.

19. It is evident that Abraham thought that the promise which had been so often made to him might be fulfilled in Ishmael, for whom, as his only child, he no doubt had a great affection.

20. The names of the twelve sons of Ishmael may be seen Ch. xxv. 16.

22. As this is not said to be a vision, but an appearance of God to Abraham, it is not improbable but that it might be such an appearance as that which is related in the next chapter, viz. in a human form.

25. The

25. *The Arabs*, many of whom were descended from *Ishmael*, retain to this day the rite of circumcision, and perform it as the Mahometans also do, at the age of thirteen.

Ch. XVIII. 1. There cannot be a doubt but that what is here called an appearance of *Jehovah* was in the form of man: For one of the three (who all appeared in that form) and for whom Abraham even made an entertainment, of which they actually partook, addressed him in that character. And as this could only be an appearance assumed for the occasion, other appearances which are called *angels*, and which were in a human form, may have been temporary only, and not permanent beings, tho' other passages of scripture lead us to suppose there are such beings, of a nature superior to man, and there is nothing improbable in the supposition. It is possible, however, that those who have appeared in the character of angels may have been men who had been translated, or raised from the dead, like *Enoch*, *Moses*, and *Elijah*:

2. These men must have been at some distance when Abraham began to run to meet them. He, therefore, took them to be men, and according to the custom of the East, shewed a readiness to offer them the rights of hospitality.

6. In the East bread for the consumption of the day is made every morning, and bread in the form of thin cakes, baked in the manner here described, is not uncommon even in the Western countries of Europe.

9. That the speaker in this verse is he who assumed the character of the Supreme Being is particularly evident from v. 13.

12. This

12. This must have been a laugh of incredulity, and not of joy and wonder, like that of Abraham, and therefore she is reproved for it.

17. Two of these personages having gone towards Sodom, he who represented the Supreme Being remained and conversed with Abraham.

19. *To know* often signifies *to approve*.

20. No doubt the wickedness of the inhabitants of Sodom must have been well known to an omniscient deity ; but, as on the occasion of the building of Babel, he now chose to represent himself as acting in the manner of men, and therefore not deciding till enquiry had been regularly made.

22. As one of these three is expressly called Jehovah, I see no reason to suppose that the person with whom Abraham now conversed was any other than the same ; and not, as bishop Patric and others have imagined, such an appearance as was exhibited to Moses, viz. a bright cloud, tho' such was the most usual symbol of the divine presence.

24. There is the greatest modesty and prudence, as well as the most amiable benevolence and piety, expressed in the whole conduct of this intercession. At first Abraham petitions for a small concession, and this being readily granted, he asks for a larger, and that repeated, till his modesty and reverence would not permit to proceed any farther.

33. This departure of the person representing Jehovah, is expressed in the same words as that of the two angels, or of any other person. Whither he went is not said.

Ch. XIX. 1. These were, no doubt, two of the three persons who had been with Abraham. Lot's sitting in the gate of the city was perhaps with a view to invite strangers to his house.

2. It is not unusual to sleep in the open air, and it is done without any great inconvenience, in some Eastern countries; and all travellers carry with them provisions, and every thing necessary for passing the nights with safety.

4. This behaviour of the people of Sodom implies such a degree of shameless wickedness as is barely credible.

5. They wanted to abuse them in a carnal manner, from which this odious vice obtained the name of *Sodomy*.

8. This offer of his daughters can only be apologized for, not excused, from Lot's superstitious regard to the rights of hospitality, and the reverence he had conceived for his guests.

22. The word *Zoar* signifies *small*. What was the former name of this place does not appear.

24. *The Lord raining from the Lord*, means that he himself did it; his immediate agency, or interposition, producing that rain. Nothing is here said of the Lake or Sea, which, no doubt, at this time, or soon afterwards, filled the plain in or near which these cities stood; but what is here called *brimstone* will account for the *bitumen* with which this place abounds; and so strongly is this sea impregnated with a bitter salt, that it is said no fishes can live in it. Its specific gravity is, on this account, greater than that of the waters of the

open sea. If the ground on which these cities stood, had sunk (but this circumstance is not mentioned) water would in time fill the space, and receive its present impregnation from the bitumen and salts with which the neighbouring soil abounds.

26. A *pillar of salt* may signify a lasting memorial, that is, of her rashness and disobedience. Or her body might be so covered, and impregnated, with a saline substance, as to remain a long time without perishing.

30. Perhaps finding the people of Zoar not less vicious than those of Sodom, he was apprehensive of another visitation, similar to that of which he had been a witness before.

32. The motive of this improper conduct was evidently nothing more than to avoid the reproach of dying childless; for it does not appear to have been repeated.

23. He probably took her for a female slave, whom he might have taken for a concubine, or wife, after the death of his former wife.

37. These daughters of Lot appear not to have been ashamed of what they had done. *Mosh* signifies *from my father*, and *Ben ammi* the *son of my people*, which intimates, tho' not so plainly, the same thing. It is evident, however, from their making their father drunk, that he would not have approved of, or consented to, what they did.

Ch. XX. 1. Gerar is supposed to have been about six miles to the South of Mamre.

2. It seems extraordinary that, after what had passed in Egypt, Abraham should again call Sarah his sister,

ter, and expose her and himself to the same risk as before. Sarah was at that time ninety years old. But having born no children, and human life being then longer than it is at present, she might retain much of her former beauty. Besides, having been restored to a capacity of bearing children, her whole constitution must have been, as it were, renovated.

Abimelech seems to have been a name common to all the kings of the Philistines, as Pharaoh was to those of Egypt.

9. It should seem that Abimelech was no stranger to the true God. But this was consistent with the worship of inferior deities. Thus Laban had teraphim, which were idols, tho' he acknowledged the God of Abraham and Isaac:

7. A prophet here may signify a person of eminent piety, one in particular favour with God.

12. She was the daughter of his brother Haran, and therefore the grand-daughter of his father; but such are called *daughters*, as any lineal male descendant is called a *son*, in the scriptures. Abraham must have been the son of another wife of Terah, and not the mother of Haran.

18. Dr. Geddes renders the verse, *Lo I have given thy brother a thousand pieces of silver, to purchase vails for thee, and for all thy attendants that are married.*

These pieces of silver were probably shekels, each, about half a crown of English money. Giving her money for the purchase of vails was a reproof to Abraham for permitting his wife to go without one. Her wear-

ing one would have prevented the inconvenience that had been experienced.

18. It seems unreasonable to punish the family of Abimelech, when even he had not been guilty of any crime ; tho' he seems, like Pharaoh, to have taken Sarah without the leave of Abraham, or her own consent. What the Divine Being inflicted would serve as an intimation, that there was some irregularity in the conduct of the king, and lead him to enquire into the matter.

Ch. XXI. 9. Ishmael was then fifteen or sixteen years old, and he perhaps laughed at the great parade that was made about an infant, as Isaac then was.

14. It is not easy to imagine any good reason for Abraham's sending away Hagar alone, and seemingly so ill provided for a journey of any length ; for as she was from Egypt, she probably intended to go thither. And yet the affection that Abraham evidently had for Ishmael must have led him to do what appeared to him to be sufficient for the occasion. Perhaps Hagar, thinking herself and her son to have been ill used, might have refused any particular favour. As Abraham afterwards sent away all his sons by Keturah with presents, he, no doubt, did the same for Ishmael, tho' not at that time.

15. This is a very affecting incident. A youth of the age of Ishmael must have suffered much before he could have been reduced to the condition that is here described, and the mother, no doubt, still more. She must have forgotten, or have distrusted, the divine promise

mise made to her on a former occasion, that this son of hers would be the father of a great nation.

21. This was in the northern part of Arabia, the more Southern parts being already occupied by the posterity of Joktan. As there were Arabs called *Hagarens*, it has been thought that Hagar married again, and that her posterity by this husband were called after her name. Ishmael had probably some correspondence with, if not a dependance upon, his father Abraham, since he attended his funeral together with Isaac. For we read (Gen. xxv. 9) that his sons *Isaac and Ishmael buried him*.

27. These sheep, at least some of them, were probably intended for sacrifice on this occasion.

31. *Beer sheba* may signify either *the well of the oath*, or *the well of seven*, so that the name might be an evidence of both these circumstances, seven lambs having been given as a memorial of his right to the well. The Philistines were not of the seven nations of Canaanites that were devoted to destruction. Accordingly they remained in the country, and were a long time independent of the Israelites, tho' they were eventually conquered by them.

33. Groves, as well as elevated situations, were chosen for the purpose of religious rites; the former probably on account of the solemnity with which, being dark, they naturally inspired the mind, and the latter as being supposed to be nearer to heaven, the habitation of God; but when they were abused for the purposes of idolatrous worship, they were forbidden to the Israelites.

In

In the marginal rendering it is a *tree*, and Dr. Geddes supposes it to have been a *tamarisk*, the word in Arabic having that signification.

Ch. XXII. 1. Abraham seems to have left the territories of Abimelech, tho' Beerseba was not far from them.

2. A greater trial of faith and obedience can hardly be imagined than that which is here proposed to Abraham ; especially as from this very son he had the promise of a great nation to be descended from him. He must have supposed, as the apostle says (Heb. xi. 10) that after he had been sacrificed, God would raise him to life again. He could not, however, have had any doubt of the order having come from God, before he would have complied with it. Ishmael being sent off, Isaac was in a manner his only son, and now grown to man's estate, since he was able to carry the wood for the sacrifice.

Moriah was the hill on which the temple of Solomon was afterwards built, but must at this time have been uninhabited. It appears to have been distant from Beerseba a journey of three days, and in this interval the mind of Abraham must have suffered exceedingly. On this account, the trial of his obedience was much greater than if he had executed the order that had been given him immediately.

6. It can hardly be supposed that they carried with them wood enough for the consumption of the sacrifice, but they might have enough to light the fire.

7. This is a peculiarly affecting circumstance. But it was wise and kind in Abraham to keep the knowledge

ledge of what he intended from his son, as likewise he no doubt had done from the mother, till the discovery was absolutely necessary.

9. The binding of Isaac does not necessarily imply that he made any resistance, tho' it is certainly favourable to this supposition; nor can we wonder at this, considering his tender age. This must have been a most affecting circumstance to the father.

10. The faith and obedience of Abraham were tried to the uttermost; his determination to obey the harsh command being now complete, as nothing but a counter order from the Divine Being prevented the immediate execution.

11. The speaker on this occasion, as on a former, appears to have been the Divine Being himself, but whether there was any visible appearance at this time is not said.

12. There was no countenance given to the practice of human sacrifices in this transaction. It was rather calculated to shew that, tho' the Divine Being had a right to command them, he would not accept them.

21. Mention is made of three persons of this name; one the son of Aram, Ch. x. 23, and another in the posterity of Esau, xxxvi. 28. It is thought probable that Job was descended from this Uz, and that they were his posterity that Ptolemy calls Ausitz in Arabia Deserta, near Chaldea. From Butz Elihu in Job was probably descended, Ch. xxxii, 2. It could not be from this Aram; but from another, the son of Shem, that the Syrians were descended. From Chesed, the Chaldeans, called in the scriptures Chaldim, are thought by some

some to have derived their name, tho' there must have been some other people settled in these parts before that time; since Abraham had lived there. From this Maachah it is supposed that the city of *Maachah*, or *Abel-Beth-Maachah*, situated, as it is thought, between the two Lebanons, might receive its name.

Ch. XXIII. 1. As Sarah was ninety years old at the birth of Isaac, she must have lived till he was thirty five years old.

2. Arba was a person of great note among the Anakims, as we learn from Joshua xiv. 15. It is, therefore, probable that he built this city. It does not appear when Abraham left ~~Beer-sheba~~ to come to this place. It was a very antient city, as appears from Num. xiii. 22.

3. From this transaction it appears that in those times of great simplicity there was no want of real politeness. It is equally conspicuous on the part of Abraham and of Ephron the Hittite.

10. This was transacted at the gate of the city, where all public business was done, and Ephron was probably a chief man who sat there as judge. Dr. Geddes renders the passage, *Ephron, who was then sitting, among the Hittites.*

15. This amounts to about fifty pounds English money, a sum which he seems to say was of little consequence to either of them.

16. In early times money passed by weight, as it still does in China. Afterwards it was coined, and stamped, to save the trouble of constant weighing.

Ch.

Ch. XXIV. 1. Abraham was now one hundred and forty years old. For he was one hundred when Isaac was born, and Isaac was forty when he was married.

2. This putting the hand under the thigh, tho' to us a very indelicate thing, was practised, as is shewn by Martine the Benedictine) by various nations in early times, when very solemn promises, or oaths, were taken. On what idea this was done, is not known.

3. It is probable; from this circumstance of Abraham's unwillingness to have his son married into any family of the Canaanites, that they were by this time infected with idolatry, as well as the country that he had left.

4. Tho' it appears that some superstitions were introduced into the families of Nahor, who had followed his brother as far as Haran, he acknowledged the supremacy of the one true God.

12. The piety, as well as the fidelity, of this servant of Abraham, is very conspicuous and pleasing.

15. We see here the simplicity of these antient times, when the daughters of opulent families did not scruple to do very mean and laborious offices.

20. It seems extraordinary that neither this servant of Abraham, nor any of the inferior servants who were with him, assisted in drawing the water, as, no doubt, they had with them vessels, and other implements, for such purposes, the occasion of their long journey requiring them. They could not all of them have been overcome with fatigue.

22. The

22. The whole of the present, it is supposed, might amount to twenty pounds English money.

23. It was usual in ancient times not to ask a stranger any thing concerning his business till he had been refreshed, and sometimes till after he had made some stay; but the servant of Abraham declined this civility, for the sake of expediting the business on which he was sent.

24. Laban seems to have had the greatest authority in the family, tho' his father was living. Perhaps he was superannuated. On this occasion, however, tho' not before, Bethuel is introduced, his consent being probably necessary to the transaction.

25. It was the custom for a considerable time to elapse between the sponsals and the consummation of a marriage:

26. They did not consult Rebecca about the marriage, having the power of disposing of her, but only about the time of its taking place.

27. This well is mentioned Ch. xvi. 14; so that after the death of Sarah, Abraham had returned to Beer-sheba.

28. It was always the custom for the bride to be introduced to the bridegroom with a veil on.

29. In the ancient houses, and tents also, the apartments for the women were different from those of the men, and more retired.

XXV. 1. Sarah being dead, and Isaac married, Abraham who lived thirty-five years after this, might want a female companion and assistant, and therefore took another wife, probably one of his female slaves, such as Hagar had been

been; and considering how late in life, even at this day, some men have children, there is no good objection to the truth of the history on that account. But it is probable that Abraham had taken Keturah in the lifetime of Sarah, as he had done with respect to Hagar. This verse may be rendered, *he had taken another wife.*

All these sons of Keturah were settled some where to the East of Palestine, in Arabia. From Zimran might be descended the people called Zamaireni, in Arabia Felix, mentioned by Pliny. The Homerites, another tribe of Arabs, are said to be descended from Jokhan. They circumcised on the eighth day, whereas other Arabs did it in the thirteenth year. From Medan, a district in the Southern part of Arabia Felix, called Madiana, might have its name; and from Midian may have come the Midianites in Arabia Petraea. Of Ishbak nothing probable is even conjectured. A town called Susa in that part of Arabia which is next to Egypt might be so called from Shuah.

3. From this Sheba it is supposed that those Sabians who bordered upon Syria, not far from the country of Job, and who are said to have plundered him, were descended. Besides Dadan, which is supposed to have had its name from Dedan the son of Rhegma, Gen. x. v, there was a Dedan in Idumea, mentioned by Jeremiah, Ch. xxv. 23, XLIX, viii, whose inhabitants are called Dedanim, Is. xxi, 13, which might have been founded by this Dedan. Of the other sons of Abraham mentioned in this verse nothing is known.

4. Midian and Ephah are mentioned together, *Is.* lx. 6, and mention is made of a Midian on the Red Sea, near to which was Ephah, the same perhaps that is called Hippos by Ptolemy. A city called Aphar and Tipharon, the metropolis of the Homerites may have had its name from this Ephah. From this Hanoch a town called Cane, and the district called Canauria, in Arabia Felix, may have had their names. There was a district in Arabia called Devada, over against Canauna, which may have been settled by this Abidah. From Etdaah might perhaps have come the name of a town called Elana in the Arabic gulph, from which it was called Sinus Elanitis, and the people near it Elanitæ.

5. Abraham reserved the greatest part of his wealth for Isaac, whose mother was of a condition superior to that of his other wives, called concubines. To all his other children, he, no doubt, gave what was sufficient for their decent establishment.

7. At the time of Abraham's death Esau and Jacob were about fifteen years old. For Isaac was sixty when they were born, and seventy five when his father died.

8. By being gathered to his people, is probably to be understood that he died as his ancestors had done before him, and was gone to the same place, the state of the dead, whatever that was.

9. Tho' Ishmael lived at some distance, it is probable from this circumstance that he lived in good correspondence with Isaac, and retained a becoming respect for their common father.

11. This

11. This was the place in which he resided at the time of his marriage:

12. We see here the fulfilment of the promise of God respecting Ishmael, that twelve princes should descend from him; by *princes* being probably meant the heads of so many different tribes:

13. From Nebajoth the whole of Arabia Petrea obtained the name of Nabathea or Nabathis; and the inhabitants that of Nabathæi: The posterity of Kedar were called Kedareni: They lived in tents. Thus David complained that he long *dwelled in the tents of Kedar*, when he was obliged to fly from his country, and take refuge among them.

14. Dumah appears from Is. xxi. 11, to have been settled near Idumæa. Some think the Athritæ in Arabia Felix to have been descended from Hadar, that Jetur was the ancestor of the Ituræi in Cæle Syria, and Kedemah to be the Kedem mentioned Jer. xlix. 28. But these are slight probabilities: and of the other sons of Ishmael we find no traces; which, considering the distance of the time, and the little knowledge we have of the ancient state of Arabia, is not extraordinary.

16. Tho' many of the Arabs lived in tents, from which they had the appellation of Scenitæ; others built towns, and even fortified castles.

18. Shur bordered upon Egypt, and Havilah was next to the Amalekites, on the way from Egypt to Assyria. The former is sometimes called the wilderness of Sin, of Paran, and of Kedar. The Ishmaelites had the sons of Keturah to the East of them, and the des-

endants of Isaac to the West; and in that situation continued to be a respectable people.

19. Tema is *Tehama*, which signifies *sea coast*, or that part of Southern Arabia which borders on the Red Sea. *Bruce's Travels*, p. 302.

20. Bethuel and Laban are called Syrians from their living in Padan Aram, and Jacob is also so called Deut. xvi. 5, from his having resided some time in that place. Padan Aram is by Hosea (Ch. xii. 12) called *Sedo Aram*, both which names intimate that it was a fruitful, and well cultivated country; whereas the part of Mesopotamia next to Babylon was stony and barren.

22. Perhaps she was apprehensive that she could not be safely delivered, and therefore that it was to little purpose that she had conceived. It is evident from this, that there was some established mode of consulting the divine oracle before the construction of the tabernacle. For to *inquire of the Lord* means something more than praying. But it is in vain to conjecture how, or where, this was done.

23. This is a concise, but a very clear prediction, and was remarkably verified; the posterity of Jacob, the younger son, becoming far more considerable than that of Esau the elder, and finally conquering them. But this had not taken place in the time of Moses, who recorded the prediction.

25. It is evident from the subsequent history, that Esau was covered with close hair like a goat; for in order to make Jacob pass for him, his mother put goat's skins on his neck and hands. Had he had a wife like himself

himself, there might have been a race of hairy men, as well as of blacks; and yet all descended from one stock. How the name of Esau refers to this circumstance does not clearly appear.

28. Jacob signifies a *supplanter*. It is observable that the faith and patience of Isaac were sufficiently exercised in the long barrenness of his wife, as was that of Abraham.

30. The red pottage that Jacob gave to Esau was probably of *lentils*, which when boiled is of the colour of chocolate.

It appears extraordinary that Jacob should not, without any prospect of recompence, have relieved his brother, when he was near dying with hunger. This seems to have been as blameworthy as the contempt that Esau expressed for his birthright in these circumstances. Had this history been an invention of any descendant from Jacob, nothing of this kind would have been found in it. Indeed, no narrative, antient or modern, has more characters of truth, than the whole history of these patriarchs. They had the faults of other men, and nothing of that kind is concealed or disguised.

Ch. XXVI. This Abimelech could not well be the same with the king of Gerar of the same name, in the time of Abraham, an hundred years having elapsed between the two events. A king of this country is called Abimelech in David's time. In the history he is called Achish (Sam. xxi. 10) but in the 3^d Psalm he is called Abimelech.

NOTES ON

5. Nothing is promised to Isaac on account of his own merit. Indeed, no particular act of obedience is recorded of him. He worshipped the God of his father, but in this, after knowing the history of his father, there was no great merit; and we shall see that he followed his father in one of his faults.

7. She was a near relation, and such as are called brothers and sisters in the language of scripture. But he concealed the truth, in not saying that she was his wife.

12. Perhaps, in the case of Jacob, such an instance was not so in general, &c. What this was is not

ances in which this corn was extraordinary, tho' it is of some kinds of grain.

26. Phicol is the name of the man, but it could not be a title, or the name of the man.

that occurs Ch. xxi. 22. person. It was perhaps a

35. What, the cause of grief to the parents of Esau, but for the same reason that Abraham was grieved for his wife for his son of the women of the world ought not to have done it; as it is against the consent, and perhaps

tion, of his father.

Ch. XXVII. He was at this time one hundred and thirty seven years old.

4. A blind old man, having but few enjoyments, may be excused for his attachment to those that remain to him. But his eating this food, whatever it was, could have no natural connection with the blessing he had to deliver. He knew the magnificent promises of God to his father, and that they were to be entailed

on

on his posterity; but perhaps not having heard of the answer of God to Rebecca, or not sufficiently attending to it, he might think that it depended on himself to transfer it to which of his sons he chose.

8. The conduct of Rebecca, whose favourite Jacob was, was very natural. She thought that the blessing being once delivered could not be recalled, and the Divine Being in whose councils it was that Jacob should have the pre-eminence, suffered them to proceed as they had projected. But had nothing of this kind been done, provision would, no doubt, have been made to secure this blessing to Jacob in some other way.

9. The taste of meat is easily disguised by sauces, and only experience can shew how difficult it is to distinguish different kinds of meat by the taste only, without the aid of some other sense.

15. Esau being quite hairy, like a goat, had probably some peculiar smell, which his clothes would retain.

18. He, no doubt, suspected him from the voice of Esau not being well imitated.

29. The principal part of the promise of God to Abraham, was a degree of happiness superior to that of any other nation, which implied a degree of superiority to every other. But proper dominion over other nations was not distinctly mentioned before. This is now given to the posterity of Jacob over that of Esau.

33. Well knowing that he had spoken by a divine impulse, and that the blessing could not be recalled, it is no wonder that he was so much affected on finding that it was given contrary to his intention.

39. The Edomites, descended from Esau, inhabit a mountainous and not very fruitful country, far inferior to the land of Canaan. As therefore, the words in the original will bear this sense, it is preferable to a different one, tho' that might be defended. Dr. Geddes, after Castalio and others, renders the passage, *Remote from the fatness of the earth, and the dew of heaven from above, must thy residence be. On thy desert shalt thou live.*

40. The Edomites differed not much from the Arabs who lived in a great measure by plunder. They were conquered by David, but they recovered their independence in the reign of Joram, 2 Kings, viii. 20, 22. 2 Chron. xxi. 8, &c. But this was only for a time, as they were finally subdued by the Maccabees, and incorporated with the Jewish nation.

45. She might know the temper of Esau to be generous and placable, as it proved to be, and would naturally conclude that if Jacob was murdered, his death would be revenged by some person who 'might think himself injured by it, tho' he had no other brother. Or it might be thought necessary that the father himself should order such an execution of a divine law, tho' made against his will.

46. This was a good reason, but not the true one, for the proposal she had to make.

Ch XXVIII. 1. Isaac must have been well satisfied that Jacob was the real object of the blessing which he had pronounced, or he would not have repeated it, especially after the indignation that he must have felt for the deception that had been put upon him.

9. There

9. There could not have been any thing offensive to Isaac in the family of Ishmael, with whom it is probable that he lived on good terms. At this time it is probable that it was free from idolatry, at least as much so as the family at Padan Aram. Indeed, the Arabs do not appear ever to have given into the horrid idolatries of the Canaanites, and some other of the neighbouring nations. Together with the worship of the heavenly bodies, they retained some knowledge of the true God. Job was probably living at this time, and he was no idolater, nor were any of his three friends, or Elihu.

10. Jacob seems to have travelled quite alone, without servants or treasure of any kind. This he might do to conceal his flight from Esau.

12. This emblematical vision intimated that there is a constant intercourse between earth and heaven, and therefore that the affairs of men are not overlooked by the Supreme Being; who by some symbol of his presence, was represented at the top of this ladder, or, as Dr. Geddes renders it, near to it.

13. This is the first time of God's appearing to Jacob. Having, no doubt, been informed of similar appearances to his father and grandfather, and knowing that he was the heir of the promises made to them, there would not appear any thing very extraordinary in this.

16. He seems to have apprehended that God was at other times peculiarly present in this place, more than in any other.

18. On what idea the practice of *anointing* things peculiarly devoted, or consecrated, to God, was founded, does not appear ; but this was not probably the first instance of it. It was much practised by the heathens. With them any large and smooth stone was regarded with particular veneration ; and many of them, tho' lying in the high way, were anointed by travellers ; as we learn from Arnobius, who confesses it with respect to himself. Jacob seems to have erected this pillar as a memorial of his vision, and it was naturally much venerated by his posterity. It was in after times conveyed to Jerusalem, and after the destruction of that city by the Romans, the Jews are said to have made lamentations over it.

19. It is possible that from this term the Heathens might as has been conjectured, derive their *Betulia*, which signifies such consecrated rude stones as that of Jacob probably was at Bethel. The practice of erecting such stones having been abused to the purpose of superstition, it was afterwards expressly forbidden in the laws of Moses. Lu. xxvi. 1. Deut. xii.² 3.¹ xvi. 22. The word *Luz* signifies an *almond tree*, and such might abound in that place

20. *If I return in safety &c. and thou, the Lord, be a God to me.* DR. GENDES.

22. On this occasion Jacob devoted himself and his substance in a peculiar manner to the service of God, in opposition, no doubt, to the false Gods that were then worshipped by others. To what use these tythes of his substance were to be applied, does not appear ; but
he

he seems to have intended to lay an obligation on his posterity to reserve a tenth of the fruits of their labour for some religious use.

Ch. XXIX. 2. *Three shepherds were lying by it.*
 CONJ.

3. *Thither were all the shepherds gathered.* SAM.

5. He was the grandson of Nahor:

8. *Until all the shepherds be gathered together.* SAM.

9. It is observable that young women of the best families that we read of in these primitive times, as Rebecca, Rachel, and the daughters of Jethro, did themselves tend sheep, and performed very laborious offices in watering them, &c. There were, no doubt, slaves or servants in those families; but bodily labour was not thought, disreputable to either sex.

18. It is evident that Jacob had no money to give for a wife, as was the custom of those times; and seven years service seems to have been a great deal to give, especially by a relation.

20. Mr. Halked, in the *Preface to the code of Gentoo laws*, says, that with the Hindoos it is criminal for a man to give his younger daughter in marriage before the elder, or for a younger son to marry while his elder brother remains unmarried, p. 70.

23. Brides were brought with veils, and without light, to the bedchamber; so that it was not difficult to impose upon Jacob in this manner, when he had no suspicion of any such thing.

27. After another week of festivity he was married to Rachel, and served for her seven years from that time.

32. Reuben signifies *Behold a son.*

Ch.

Ch. XXX. 2. The feelings, here strongly expressed, of both Rachel and Jacob are natural. Nothing seems to have been more desirable in those times than to have children; and to be barren was a subject of great reproach. But the envy and vexation of Rachel knew no bounds, and Jacob perceiving it, notwithstanding his great love for her, justly reproves her for it.

3. It is not easy to conceive how having children by means of a servant, or slave, could take away the reproach of barrenness in the mistress. But the children, as well as the mother, being as her offspring, satisfied her in some measure.

4. The giving names to children seems to have been in general the prerogative of the mother. *Dan* signifies *to judge*.

11. This is often expounded to signify *Good fortune comes*; but the more probable signification is *a troop*, or a great number, comes.

14. What this plant was is not certainly known. By some it is said that it was imagined to favour conception, and that for that reason it was coveted by Rachel.

16. Great injustice was certainly done to Leah, and for this no reason whatever is given, but Jacob's greater love for Rachel.

18. She makes a merit of giving her servant to her husband, but it does not appear in what the merit consisted. Her only object was to have more children that she could call *hers*, tho' they were, no doubt, at the same time her husbands too.

21. Dinah

21. *Dinah* signifies *judgment*, as if it was intended to denote that she had now got the better of her sister, God having done her justice.

24. This may signify either to *take away*, viz. her reproach, or *addition*, in expectation of having more children.

25. He had now lived with Laban fourteen years and this having been their original agreement for his two daughters, he desired to be dismissed.

23. This proposal of Jacob shews his great distrust of Laban, and a desire to remove all possibility of any future misunderstanding; at the same time that it implies his confidence in the favour of God, on which would depend the amount of his recompence.

32. The word rendered *brown* is in the Syrian *black mixed with white*. It is not known that any sheep are brown. GENESIS.

37. The word rendered *chestnut* Dr. Gaddes renders the *plane tree*. The hazel is thought to be the almond tree. By the word in the original the Arabs always mean the almond.

41. Jacob must have observed the power of imagination on cattle to have done what he did. That much does depend upon this in the human species is well known; but of the extent of it, and of the physical cause of it, we are altogether ignorant.

Ch. XXXI. 1. We have no other account of the sons of Laban than this slight mention of them; but they appear to have been of the same envious and selfish disposition with their father.

5. This is the second appearance of God to Jacob

7. What

7. What all these changes were does not appear, but they certainly imply a reflection on the equity of Laban, in not abiding by the stipulations he had made. And tho' he does not deny that he had prospered himself, and by means of Jacob, he envied him his prosperity, without considering that it was at the same time that of his own daughters.

11. The angel, and the Divine Being, are here, as on former occasions, the same person

15. Laban had done nothing for his daughters, but had taken an ungenerous advantage in the disposal of them. He could not have made more of them if they had been his slaves.

19. Teraphim are never mentioned but as images used for superstitious and idolatrous purposes. It is evident, therefore, that the family at Padan Aram was not free from idolatry. That teraphim had heads like those of men appear from the use that the wife of David made of one of them. These could not have been very large, as they were concealed in something on which she sat.

24. It is evident from this that divine communications do not necessarily imply any favour. God signified his will by Balaam.

39. There was something unreasonable in this. Had he been a slave without property, this would have been impossible; and for fourteen years, he had served without any wages.

40. According to this representation, slaves could not have fared worse than free men who served others.

42. Jacob

42. Jacob, no doubt, well knew the unfeeling and covetous disposition of Laban, which would have led him to act in this cruel and unjust manner.

43. If he could call them *his* because they were his daughters, he would, no doubt, have detained them as his own property.

45. As Chardin saw large circles of stones in Persia, such as that at Stonehenge, which are commonly referred to the times of the Druids, it is conjectured by some that the stone which was erected by Jacob was placed in the centre, and that the stones brought by his brethren, (which were evidently separate from his) might be intended to complete the circle round it. Their being called a *heap*, is some objection to this; but it may be rendered a *circle of stones*.

46. Who could be meant by the brethren of Jacob does not appear. They could not be his slaves. They must, therefore, have been either some friends who had accompanied him, or the same persons that accompanied Laban, common relations of both.

47. Jegar Shahadutha in the Syrian language signifies the *heap of witness*.

49. Mispah signifies a *watch tower*.

53. *The God of their father* is not in the Samaritan copy, or in two MS.

Ch. XXXII. This does not seem to have been a vision in the night, but a trance (in which nothing appeared except to himself) in the day time, such as was exhibited to the servant of Elisha, 2 Kings, vi. 7, when the prophet prayed that God would open his eyes, and he saw

saw the mountain full of horses, and chariots of fire round about his master.

2. Mahanaim signifies *camps*.

3. It is no wonder that Jacob should have been apprehensive of the consequence of meeting his brother whom he had so grievously offended. But perhaps, knowing the generosity of his temper, he had hopes of pacifying him, especially as he had the promise of God that no evil should befall him.

4. By this language Jacob acknowledged his inferiority to his brother; as if he meant indirectly to waive his privilege of the birthright, and his father's blessing.

5. Perhaps nothing hostile was expressed in the answer of Esau; and he might be undetermined what to do, but to have that force ready to employ as he should see occasion. It seems extraordinary that in so short a time Esau should be master of such a force. They could not all have been his proper family, or slaves. Other persons must have joined him, and have been commanded by him. Having prospered so greatly, much more than his brother, he would be the more disposed to forget what was passed; being already well established in a country of his own, while Jacob was a stranger in the land.

10. Considering the little time, only six years, in which Jacob had acquired his property, the amount of it will be thought to be very great.

22. This little river is to the East of Jordan, and runs into it.

24. The

24. This probably passed in vision, the Divine Being, as on former occasions, being represented by an appearance in a human form. Wrestling being a common and a liberal exercise, he was pleased to signify by the event of it that Jacob had prevailed with respect to the subject of his prayer.

28. *Israel signifies one who contends with God.*

30. It is evident that Jacob considered the person with whom he had been wrestling as representing the Supreme Being; and there cannot be any more objection to this appearance, had it not been a vision, than to that of the three angels to Abraham, one of whom personated the Supreme Being, and who even ate as well as conversed with him.

32. Whether this was a vision or not, it pleased the Divine Being to give Jacob a sensible token of it, by his thigh being actually strained, so as to occasion his limping, tho' probably it did not continue long. There is no account of the Israelites abstaining from this part of the animals on which they fed in the laws of Moses, nor is it mentioned on any other occasion.

Ch. XXXIII. 2. There was good policy in this disposition; that if Esau had come with a hostile intention, and met with one of these companies, he might imagine there were no more, and so the rest might escape.

3. Had Esau been really a prince, Jacob could not have behaved to him with more deference and respect.

4. If Esau was prompted by his natural feelings on this occasion, as is most probable, and not from any supernatural direction or impulse, he must have had a most generous mind. He had, no doubt, conceived

himself to be greatly injured, and yet his reconciliation was complete and lasting.

8. In the East presents are considered not so much in the light of property transferred from one person to another, as tokens of respect and deference.

14. It is probable that Jacob went to mount Seir after his arrival in the land of Canaan, having first formed an establishment, and left every thing in order under the conduct of his wives and servants; his sons, the eldest of whom was at that time not more than twelve years old, being too young to have such a charge.

18. The antient versions render this *He arrived safely at Shechem*, without supposing that there was any such city as *Shalem*.

20. *El. Elohi Israel* signifies *God, the God of Israel*.

Ch. XXXIV 2. From this Sechem the city so called might have had its name. It seems to have been an act of violence on the part of Shechem, and on that account excited a just, tho' most excessive indignation in her brothers, who conceived all the family dishonoured by it.

7. It has appeared in the history of Laban that brothers were particularly interested in the disposal of their sisters, as if they were their guardians jointly with the fathers.

12. He was willing to give more than was usual, in consideration probably of the violence his son had been guilty of.

13. It is observable that the answer is given by the sons of Jacob, and not by Jacob himself with their advice, which looks as if the power was at least as much in them; tho' he might have referred it to them.

18. It

18. *It seems extraordinary that they should so readily consent to this very harsh proposal. The authority of Shechem must have been very great in the place and it being probably a small one, the inhabitants might think that their riches and power would receive a great addition by the accession of such a family as that of Jacob.*

25. *No doubt their servants must have assisted in this business. For let the city have been ever so small, two men could not have slain so many with their own hands. There must also have been in the place slaves, and persons of a low condition who were not circumcised, and who could have been able to make opposition.*

27. *It seems that all the other sons of Jacob who had not been concerned in the murder, joined in the plunder of the place.*

30. *It is evident that Jacob highly condemned the conduct of his sons, thinking it, no doubt, equally wicked and impolitic; but he expressed his resentment much more strongly on his death bed, when there was nothing to fear from it, which shews that it was much upon his mind.*

Ch. XXXV. 1. *God was pleased to manifest his care of Jacob and of his family, notwithstanding the difficulty into which the violence of his sons had brought him, by directing him to remove from that part of the country.*

2. *From this circumstance, as well as from the stealing of Laban's teraphim by Rachel, it is evident that several persons in the family of Jacob were addicted to the heathen superstitions, if not to direct idolatry. An*

ablution seems to have been practised by way of purification ; and it is the first time that any thing of the kind is mentioned. We learn from it that there were then modes of ceremonial or typical, purification, antecedent to the institutions of Moses. The change of garments implies that they had put on such as had been washed.

4. The ear-rings were probably used as charms, which had a near connection with idolatry.

5. The family of Jacob, including servants, must have been very numerous, perhaps more than a match for any one of the petty princes in the country ; and the boldness of Jacob's sons must have struck them with terror. They would also be sensible that great provocation had been given, tho' their resentment had exceeded all reasonable bounds.

8. It is not improbable that, on the death of Rebecca, Deborah chose to live in the family of Jacob, on account of several of her countrywomen being in it. It is computed that she must have been near one hundred and seventy years old when she died.

10. This was a confirmation of what had been directed before, and it was followed by the renewal of his promise made to Abraham.

13. In what manner this appearance of God was made is not said ; but as it was usually by the medium of a bright cloud, such as appeared in the wilderness, it is most natural to suppose that it was so on this occasion.

14. This drink offering, if it was different from the libation of oil, was probably of wine.

15. After this verse the LXX place v. 20, and what follows, which is a better order.

18. Ben-

18. Benjamin signifies either *the son of my right-hand*, or of *my years*, my old age.

22. That Jacob highly resented this conduct of his son, is evident from what he said of it on his death bed ; tho' not mentioned here. The LXX however add, and no doubt from some antient reading, *and it was evil in his sight.*

27. He probably now came and lived with him till his death. This place was called Arba from a person of that name among the Anakims, as appears from Josh. xiv. 15. It was afterwards called Hebron.

28. This was five years longer than Abraham had lived.

29. Esau and Jacob joining in the burial of their father looks as if they continued in friendship with each other, notwithstanding their former difference.

Ch. XXXVI. 2. There is much confusion both in the text and the antient versions in the account of Esau's wives. In Ch. xxvi. 34, his first wife is called Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite. Perhaps she is here omitted as having had no issue. Ada here in all the copies is called Bashemath, and Elon, who is here said to be a Hittite, is in all the copies, and in the Samaritan, Syriac, and some Greek copies, called a Hivite. GEDDES.

3. The Samaritan has preserved the true reading. She, is, however the same with Bashemath.

6. It is probable that after the death of Isaac, Esau and Jacob would divide his large inheritance, and continue together some time ; till, finding it to be inconve-

nient, Esau removed to mount Seir, where he had been settled before.

12. It is not in the least degree probable that the Amalekites who were devoted to destruction were the descendants of Esau, tho' he had a son of that name. On the contrary, particular respect was to be paid by the Israelites to the posterity of Esau. Deut. xxi, 7. *Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite, because he is thy brother.*

13. *Mahalath the wife of Esau.* SAM.

Bathemath was the daughter of Elon the Hittite. See Gen. xvi, 34.

14. *The son of Zibeon.* SAM.

15. The title of *Duke* is probably the same with that of *Emir*, or the head of a tribe among the Arabs at this day.

16. There is some uncertainty about this prince Korah. He is not mentioned in the Samaritan or two MSS.

17. *The sons of Mahalath.* SAM.

20. From this Seir the country had its name; but from whom he was descended does not appear.

21. The Horites had possession of the country before they were conquered by the Edomites. When they got the possession of it is not said.

24. The word that in our common translation is rendered *mules*, may, with a little alteration, signify *waters*, and therefore is by some translated *hot baths*. We find no mention of mules till the time of David. The Samaritan version has *Emeans* (the same no doubt with

Emims

Emims) who were neighbours of the Horites, Gen. xiv. 5; and the Chaldee paraphrast has *giants*, which the *Emims* were. Deut. ii. 10.

30. Hori must have been the ancestor of Seir.

31—43. These verses were probably taken from i. Chron. i. 43—54. K.

This observation might naturally be added after the time of Moses. Bishop Cumberland observes that these kings were not descended from Esau, but were Horites, who reigned in the country before they were conquered by the Edomites, who appear to have had some connection with them by intermarriages.

33. Bozra was afterwards the metropolis of the country.

35. The Midianites might have come to invade them, and Hadad might have defeated them in that part of the country which bordered on Moab.

37. The phrase *on the river* always means the Euphrates, if it be not the Nile in Egypt. Some of the Horites might have been settled in that part of the country.

39. As none of the wives are mentioned before this, she might have been a woman who had particularly distinguished herself, tho' on what account does not appear.

40. After giving an account of the princes who had reigned in the country when it was in the possession of the Horites, the historian recites those who were descended from Esau.

Ch. XXXVII. There is not, perhaps, in all history a more interesting story than this of Joseph, his being

sold into Egypt, his brethren meeting him there, and all his family following him, and it is as instructive, in a variety of respects, as it is interesting.

2. Joseph was then seventeen years old, and therefore not equal to the care of cattle, like his brothers. He was committed to the care of the sons of his wives of inferior rank; the father perhaps thinking that they would have less envy and jealousy than the sons of Leah; and yet there were two of them, viz. Reuben and Judah, who shewed the most generosity and compassion. It is observable that the sons of Jacob are not celebrated for their piety, or virtue of any kind, which is an argument for the simplicity and truth of the history. A descendant of theirs, who had been at liberty to invent the story, would, no doubt, have represented their characters in a much more favourable light,

3. Coloured garments were scarce and dear in those early times, and were worn only by persons of some distinction. Cloth of this kind Martine the Benedictine says was considered by the heathens as proper for the Gods only, and too honourable for men.

Several antient versions render this, *Because he was a wise and prudent son*, the word in the original being with a slight variation *the son of the elders* or senators. Benjamin was younger than Joseph fifteen years.

4. This envy of the brothers was not unnatural, and might have been foreseen, and obviated, by the father.

5. This dream was prophetic; and the simplicity of Joseph appears in his telling it to his brothers, who would easily perceive in it a meaning to their prejudice.

8. This

8. This second dream was to the disparagement of his father, as well as of his brothers, and for the same reason gave offence to them all.

11. He considered it as something more than a common dream, and remembered and reflected upon it as such. Joseph's own mother was then dead, but this term, as well as that of *father*, was used with more latitude than with us, viz. for any elderly female relation. It might respect some of his other wives.

12. This was about fifty miles from the place of Jacob's residence.

20. This pit might have been one that was designed to hold rain water, but was now empty.

25. This appears to have been such a caravan as now crosses the same deserts. Spices of various kinds were always the produce of Arabia, and were sure to find a market in Egypt, which did not produce them. What these spices were is uncertain. Bochart endeavours to prove that the word here rendered *balm* signifies *turpentine* or *rosin*. Balm, he says, was not known in Palestine before the time of Solomon. The word translated *spices*, Aquila makes to be *stirax*.

26. On this, and on other occasions, Judah seems to have had the most influence in the family. We shall see more of this in the progress of the history; and his descendants maintained the same ascendancy over the other tribes.

28. The same persons are here called both *Ishmaelites* and *Midianites*. The caravan probably consisted of both these people, and they were neighbours to each other. As ten of Joseph's brothers were present

at this transaction, they agreed for two pieces each. If they were shekels, the whole sum was no more than £. 2. 6. 3 English money.

29. Reuben has been supposed to hope to ingratiate himself with his father, after the great offence he had given him. But his behaviour seems rather to have arisen from real affection, or at least an abhorrence of murder.

34. It pleased God to exercise the patience of Jacob as he had done that of Abraham, Isaac, and other excellent men, by suffering them to afflict themselves for things which, seen in their true light, were not just causes of affliction.

36. It is evident, that this person, called *an eunuch*, had a wife; but because such offices as he held were generally entrusted to eunuchs, he had that name.

Ch. XXXVIII. 1. The history contained in this chapter is so little to the credit of the founder of the principal tribe in Israel, that none of his descendants would have invented it. Indeed it is related in so natural and simple a manner, as to vouch for its own truth. *After this time*, probably means some time after Joseph was sold into Egypt. Adullam was a city which afterwards fell to the lot of Judah; and in which there was a cave in which David concealed himself. 1 Sam. xxii. 1.

3. *She called, SAM.* So also, v. 29.

7. Perhaps his untimely death was considered as a divine judgment; and from this his wickedness might be inferred. No person, however, who had invented the story, would have mentioned it in this manner.

8. This

8. This custom of keeping up the family of a brother prevails in Indostan ; and there it appears to have been established before it was made one of the laws of Moses. There widows without children have a claim not only on the brothers of their husband, but on the father, or any near relation capable of having children.

10. The sin of Oman did not consist in the mere act of self pollution, but in his disobedience to the law, and his fathers injunction.

12. Timnath was probably not far from Adullam, as this also was a city in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 7. The time of sheep shearing was always considered as a season of festivity, being a kind of harvest to the shepherd.

14. In general, prostitutes wore no vails, as all women of character did ; but it might be otherwise in those very early times.

16. She took his seal, or ring, and the ribbon or string, by which it was suspended from his neck, as is the custom with some Arabs at this day ; and also his staff, as being things which he could not but know again. It is evident that her motive was the same with that of Lot's daughters ; not wantonness, but the desire of having a child, and of the family of her husband.

24. It appears from this that the heads of families were supreme judges in it. By being *burned* no doubt means the punishment of death by burning. She was considered as an adulteress, in consequence of being betrothed.

26. He had not done her justice in withholding his son from her, besides using her as a harlot.

28. The word here rendered *scarlet* signifies a *worm*; colour, coming from an excrescence of a kind of oak, made by a fly, as the common galls are produced. The colour was a beautiful crimson, and retained its lustre for ages.

29. Perez signifies a *breach*.

30. Zerah may signify *rising*, as applied to the rising of the sun; because he made his appearance first.

Ch. XXXIX. 2. This phrase does not imply any peculiar interposition, but such a secret direction of events as shewed in the result that there must have been something extraordinary in the case. Such was the prosperity of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of Laban while Jacob was with him. Whether there be any visible interposition of providence or not, success is always to be ascribed to God; and whether this was provided for in the original plan of providence, or produced by real tho' invisible miracles, the author being the same, our gratitude ought to make no difference.

4. It is no uncommon thing in the East to commit the chief direction of men's affairs to slaves, and even that of kingdoms; such persons being depended upon for attachment to their masters. The word signifies *attending on the person*, which was a mark of favour.

9. It is evident that Joseph had a strong sense of religion properly so called upon his mind. He considered adultery not only as an offence against man, and a violation of the rules of society, but as an offence against

gainst God, and which would draw after it his displeasure and punishment, either in this life or another.

12. The garment being left in the house was an ambiguous circumstance, and apparently in favour of the wife. For it was more probable that he had put off his garment for the purpose of lying with her, than that she had been able to get it from him in the struggle.

20. Had his guilt been clearly proved, Joseph, would, no doubt, have suffered capital punishment; but his former good conduct must have made a favourable impression on the mind of his master.

22. The confidence of the keeper of the prison in a person who was himself a prisoner, is more extraordinary than that of his former master; because he was answerable for the safe custody of all the persons committed to his keeping.

Ch. XL. 8. It appears from this account that there were persons who pretended to interpret dreams; and for this they must have had certain rules, which could not have had any foundation in the reason of things. Arts of this kind always accompanied other modes of divination, and these had always some connection with idolatry. Joseph, however, had a just idea of the matter. He was sensible that it was only the Divine Being himself, who sometimes sends prophetic dreams, that could enable any person to discover the meaning of them. Tho' therefore he desired to hear their dreams, he did not undertake to give the interpretation of them, but intimated that he should speak as he was directed; and it is not improbable, considering his great piety, that

that like his pious ancestors, he had been sometimes favoured with divine communications. Indeed, without this supposition, it is not easy to account for his extraordinary piety in such an idolatrous country as Egypt probably then was; himself in the condition of a slave, and so young when he was carried thither. His brethren had had the same, and superior advantage of education, having continued with their father much longer than he had; and yet their characters were greatly inferior to his.

11. Egypt never produced much wine, tho' as it appears to have produced grapes, the inhabitants, no doubt, could have made wine. Pharaoh, however, drank the unfermented juice of the grape.

13. *Bring them to trial.* P.

14. The great confidence with which Joseph delivered the interpretation of these dreams, must have proceeded from a consciousness of divine inspiration for the purpose.

15. By the *land of the Hebrews*, was meant that district of the Canaan, which was occupied by the family of Jacob, whose ancestors had come from beyond the river Euphrates, and on that account were called *Hebrews*. Tho' this prison is denominated by a word which commonly signifies a *dungeon*, or a place without light; yet from the circumstances here mentioned, it is probable that they were conversing at their ease in a much better situation. Tho', therefore, these prisoners might have been confined with more rigour at their first commitment, they must have obtained more liberty, and better accommodations afterwards.

16 Having

16. Having heard so favourable an interpretation of his fellow servant's dream, and his own very much resembling it, he, no doubt, expected something as much in his own favour.

23. It is hardly possible that the interpretation of a dream so exactly verified could have been forgotten. Satisfied with his own good fortune, he might not so far think of Joseph as to endeavour to serve him; and he might be apprehensive of bringing himself into some trouble by his interference.

Ch. XII. 1. This was probably the second year after the release of the two prisoners.

2. Tho' these dreams of Pharaoh were supernatural, it was natural for the scene of them to be near the river which watered the whole country.

4. It is not natural for animals that are not carnivorous to eat one another, much less those of their own kind. Still more extraordinary would it seem for ears of corn to vanish into one another. But in dreams many things most contrary to nature seem to take place, and without exciting any surprize. Men, for example, are naturally incapable of flying; and yet it is observed by Dr. Hartley and others, that many persons are apt to imagine themselves to be carried through the air in their dreams.

There is in Egypt a species of wheat that has actually seven ears on one stalk, but the stem is solid, very different from ours. The produce of it per acre is said to exceed that of any other wheat.

8. He was sensible, as Nebuchadnezzar was afterwards, that there was something very extraordinary in his
his

his dreams, and imagined that they must portend something of consequence. He, therefore, sent for persons who pretended to skill in the interpretation of dreams; but perhaps they could not agree among themselves. At least they were not able to give satisfaction to the king.

9. This sudden recollection might be pretended; and he might, on reflecting, think that by introducing to the king one who could give him satisfaction, he might serve himself.

16. Here Joseph, as before, disclaims all skill in the interpretation of dreams, and acknowledges that it depended wholly upon God.

25. Joseph speaking with so much confidence, had no doubt, been inspired to give the interpretation of the dream; tho' there is no account of any divine communication that he was favoured with for the purpose.

33. There is an appearance of impertinence in Joseph giving his advice seemingly unasked. But the narrative is concise, and no doubt imperfect. After giving the interpretation of the dream, it might have been proposed to consider of the measures that were proper to be taken in consequence of it. It is evident by their conduct, that neither Pharaoh, nor any of his counsellors entertained a doubt with respect to the interpretation of the dream, any more than Joseph himself. To this his having given true interpretations of the dreams of the butler and baker would, no doubt, contribute; and the event would soon verify the prediction. When the years of extraordinary plenty came, they would naturally expect those of scarcity; and after the

the first year of this kind, they would have no doubt of their continuance till the seven years were expired.

42. This garment was probably of *cotton*, brought perhaps at that time from the East, and on that account of more value than any manufacture of Egypt.

43. This advancement of Joseph to be the chief governor of the country was natural, after their idea of his being a man divinely inspired. The Egyptian word here introduced is supposed to mean *Bow the knee*.

44. That is, I am king, but every other honour, or power, I grant to you.

45. The signification of this name given to Joseph is very uncertain. *On* is a city which the Greeks called Heliopolis, as being devoted to the worship of the *Sun*. Whenever it took place, there cannot be much doubt that the Egyptians were idolaters during the residence of the Israelites in Egypt; and there was an established order of priests, with great privileges, as will soon appear.

46. He had, therefore, been thirteen years from his father's house, having been seventeen when he was sold into Egypt.

53. *Manassch* signifies *forgetful*, and *Ephraim fruitful*.

57. This famine could not have arisen from a deficiency of water occasioned by a want of the annual overflowing of the Nile only, because it affected the neighbouring countries. Perhaps the want of rain had been so general, as to reach even Ethiopia, the waters of which supply the Nile.

Ch. XLII. It may be thought extraordinary, that Joseph, who appears to have had so much affection for his father, and even for his brothers, and especially for Benjamin, the son of his own mother, should not seem to have thought of them, and of the distresses they must have been in, till their necessities compelled them to apply to Egypt for sustenance. But we should not forget the natural effect of long absence on the minds of young persons. He was sold a slave at seventeen, when, of course his mind was easily susceptible of new impressions, and little retentive of old ones. He had been thirteen years in Egypt, in the condition of a slave, and at that time there was no regular intercourse between one country and another, so that he had no prospect of having any more connection with his family. Even the affliction of the father must have abated in this time, and much more the fond affection of a child. He retained a sense of piety, and a respect to the conduct of providence, which were, no doubt, much improved by the afflictions he had met with; and this was more than could reasonably have been expected in his situation. The sight of his brothers, would, however, naturally awaken all his dormant feelings; and then it cannot be denied that he acted the part of the best of sons and of brothers.

8. It is no wonder that Joseph's brethren did not know him, appearing in a place and situation in which they were far from having any expectation of finding him. Also being so much younger than they were, he would be much more changed in his person than they.

9. This

9. This is thought by bishop Cumberland to have been not long after the expulsion of the shepherds of Palestine, who had conquered and kept possession of Egypt some years ; and therefore a suspicion that persons from that country came as spies, was not improbable.

11. It tended to remove the suspicion, that they were all the sons of one man, who would never have sent them all on so hazardous a business.

13. It being twenty years since they had sold him, they considered him as dead.

15. What was the origin of swearing by the life of a king, is not known. It continued to be the custom under some of the Caliphs. Princes might have been considered as a kind of divinities, with a power of detecting and punishing perjury.

16. To this verse the Samaritan copy adds, *And they said unto him, The young man cannot leave his father, for if he leaves his father, his father will die.* That this was part of the speech appears from Ch. xliv. 22.

18. Joseph, being the chief governor of Egypt, had no reason to fear any man, but he would not do what was unjust from the fear of God ; a principle by which he gave his brethren to understand that he was governed.

20. A belief in a righteous providence bringing about the punishment of great crimes, is universal ; and has been known from the earliest ages of mankind. And when less attention was given to the doctrine of a future state, it is probable that divine judgments were more apparent and exemplary than they are at this day, tho' the punishment of crimes might be long delayed, as in this case.

23. By this it appears that the Hebrew language was not the same with the Egyptian, tho' they might bear a resemblance to each other.

24. This history abounds with such genuine strokes of nature, and which go so much to the heart, that it is hardly possible to attend to them without even shedding tears. Joseph could not but be greatly moved at the sight of his brethren, and the distress to which they were reduced, but would not appear so before them. It is probable from this that Simeon had behaved to him with more cruelty than the rest. That he was capable of it appears from the part that he and Levi acted towards the Shechemites.

By *inns* in this place we are not to understand any thing more than a convenient resting place for the night: Even at this day no provision has been made for travellers more than buildings to receive them, in which they provide for themselves. And these accommodations have generally been provided by charitable persons.

28. They suspected that some snare had been laid for them.

36. The apprehensions of Jacob were natural, and yet the very circumstance in which he was proved in the end to be so far from being *against him*, that it tended ultimately most to his advantage. And so we cannot doubt, it is with respect to all the evils of which we complain, under the same wise and good providence which superintends the affairs of all men.

As Reuben had four sons when it is said that Jacob went to sojourn in Egypt, and yet no mention is made of more than two at this time, it is probable that the

the seventy that are said to have gone into Egypt included all the sons and grandsons of Jacob, tho' some of them were born afterwards. This is the more probable as Benjamin, the youngest of Jacob's sons, is said to have had ten sons.

Ch. XLIII. 6. When any thing that we do turns out ill, it is natural to think that, with proper care, it might have been prevented; and much more so if it have been occasioned by any other than ourselves. The reply of Judah is very pertinent; but in the state of mind in which Jacob was it probably gave him but little satisfaction.

8. It is to be observed that Benjamin was at this time near thirty years of age, tho', being the youngest of Jacob's sons, he was called a youth.

11. The products of Canaan, which is a hilly country, were very different from those of Egypt, which was quite flat. These here mentioned were raisins, almonds, storax, pistachio nuts, and honey, or rather the inspissated juice of dates, and therefore called *palm honey* by Dr. Geddes.

14. That is, if I must lose my children, I must submit to it.

23. This steward seems to have had a knowledge of the true God from his master; and he here teaches them to ascribe their good fortune to him, without inquiring any farther.

29. This is the language of a superior to an inferior, to whom it was intended to speak civilly.

32. There is a great resemblance between the ancient Egyptians and the Hindoos. They were equally

divided into *casts*, which are so far separate from each other, that they do not even eat together, much less with persons of other nations and religions. It was probably owing to a similar religious superstition that the Egyptians would not eat with the Hebrews. They would not eat with the Greeks in the time of Herodotus.

33. They naturally wondered how any person should be able to place them according to the order of their birth, which, no doubt, Joseph had directed to be done.

34. To send any person a great proportion of prophecies, without any regard to his eating it, is still a mark of respect in the East.

Ch. XLIV. 8. Had they been capable of stealing, they would certainly have withheld money that was not expected of them, and could not have been known to be in their possession.

12. This method of searching was, no doubt, intended to keep them in suspense, and confound them the more at the last.

15. Skill in divination was pretended to by all the heathens, and by the Egyptians in particular, and as such Joseph now spoke; and therefore it does not at all follow that he had any faith in such an art.

34. We have no example of natural eloquence equal to this speech of Judah. Let it be compared with what Josephus has put into his mouth on this occasion. It is probable that it affected Joseph so much, that he discovered himself sooner than he had intended.

Ch. XLV. 3. This declaration was not intended at this time. For then he would have provided that
no

no person should have been present; but quite overcome by his natural feelings, he could no longer restrain them; and so affecting is the circumstance, tho' perfectly known before hand, that few persons, I believe, are able to peruse the account attentively without emotion. It is no wonder that his brethren were not able to answer him. For never, surely, could astonishment be greater than theirs, that the brother whom they had wickedly sold for a slave should be found in circumstances of such splendour and power; and themselves at his mercy; and yet that nothing of resentment, but on the contrary every mark of the strongest affection, should appear in his behaviour to them.

8. He knew what bitter remorse this declaration of his being their brother, tho' expressed in the kindest manner, would excite in them; and therefore, in some measure to lessen it, he leads their minds to a view of the conduct of providence in the event, tho' produced immediately by their guilt; as if the secondary cause was not to be attended to, but the primary cause only. It was not any act of theirs, he observed, but of God, which had brought him into Egypt, and for the most benevolent purposes. This persuasion had suppressed his resentment, and he wished it to assuage their feelings of sorrow and indignation. But this it could not do. It was more easy for him to forgive them, than for them to forgive themselves. The great superiority of his situation would also enable him to get the better of any thing that had been, tho' indirectly, the cause of it: whereas the humiliating circumstances into which

they had brought themselves would contribute to make their feelings more pungent.

10 He was naturally urgent to have his aged father partake of his joy, and to relieve him from all his anxiety. He, therefore, bids them make all haste to acquaint him with his situation, and what he intended to do for all the family. Goshen was that part of lower Egypt which was next to Arabia, and abounded with good pastures, and where there probably was rain, which was not the case with the rest of Egypt. It was also near the place of Joseph's residence, and the court of Pharaoh, which at that time was probably at Zoan, or Tanis, not far from one of the Eastern mouths of the Nile. He appears to have had no doubt of obtaining the consent of Pharaoh to this measure.

Goshen was properly *Geshen*, which signifies the country of grass, or of shepherds. *Bruce's Travels*, p. 230.

13. Encouraged as they had been by his affection and affability, they probably discoursed with him about the state of the family, the particulars of which he was, no doubt, anxious to know.

16. An event of this kind, so interesting to Joseph, could not but give pleasure to Pharaoh, in whose favour he so greatly was.

24. There was peculiar kindness in this admonition, and no doubt much occasion for it; as they would be apt to accuse one another of being the greatest promoters of the injustice and cruelty they had been guilty of,

26. It

26. It must have been peculiarly mortifying to Joseph's brethren to be obliged to confess their guilt in selling him, and to have occasioned their father so much grief for his supposed death.

28. How naturally are the feelings of this aged father described. The news would at first appear incredible. Like the apostles with respect to the resurrection of Jesus, he could not believe through joy. It would seem too good to be true. But his doubts being removed by the sight of the waggons that had been sent to convey him and his goods, he would give way to the feelings of joy; and having recovered his favourite and long lost son, would think he had had enough of life, and die contented; having then all that he had wished for in the world.

Ch. XLVI. 1. This was in his way from Hebron where he then lived.

4. Jacob, notwithstanding all the encouragement he had received, would naturally be apprehensive of the consequence of going with his family into Egypt, to be at the mercy of the princes of that country. But the appearance of God to him would give him intire satisfaction in all respects, and he would have a certainty of ending his days in peace, after all the troubles which had fallen to his lot, and which had far exceeded those of his father or grandfather.

7. By his *daughters* must be meant his son's wives, or other near female relations; and in this extensive sense the word is frequently used in the scriptures, similar to that of *father* and *son*.

12. As Pharez is thought not to have been more than fourteen years old when he went into Egypt, it is supposed to be impossible that he should have had two sons at this time ; and therefore it has been thought that this enumeration extends to all that were born before the death of Jacob, or presently after their removal. But the thing is not absolutely impossible.

21. The observation concerning the sons of Pharez is applicable to the case of Benjamin. But some of his sons might have been twins, which lessens the difficulty.

27. In this enumeration is comprehended Jacob himself, together with Joseph and his two sons.

28. Here again we find Judah a person of the most consequence among the sons of Jacob.

29. It is more easy to conceive, than to express, the joy of this meeting, especially on the part of the aged father, who had mourned the supposed death of his favourite son so many years. What, then, must be the joy of virtuous parents on meeting their virtuous children at the general resurrection, when they will never be separated from them any more.

34. Egypt had been invaded and conquered by shepherds ; and tho' they had been expelled, they were naturally dreaded, and disliked. The mere difference in their mode of living could not account for this. Pharaoh himself employed shepherds, and so must other Egyptians who had property in cattle have done.

Ch. XLVII. 4. Austin observes, from those who were acquainted with Egypt, that there was grass in the lower part of the country for the feeding of cattle,
independent

independent of the Nile, which probably did not overflow the land of Goshen, as it was at a considerable distance from the river.

7. Great respect was paid to age in early times, and so old a man as Jacob was, and the father of so large a family, and especially of Joseph, who was next to Pharaoh in the kingdom, would be regarded with particular respect; and his blessing, or prayer for his health and prosperity, would not be despised.

9. Tho' he was then one hundred and thirty years old, he had not attained the age of his father or grandfather; and he had gone through much more hardship than they had.

20. Joseph has been greatly censured by the friends of liberty for thus contributing to the slavery of the Egyptians; and it is not the business of any friend of revelation to vindicate his conduct, or that of any other man, however eminent in other respects. The fact is, I doubt not, faithfully related, and it is done without, any remark, by the historian. It may be observed, however, that the government of Egypt was always despotic. In the seven years of plenty Joseph had the power of appropriating to the use of the state a whole fifth part of the produce, and this could not have been by any new powers assumed by himself. And this was the utmost that the new regulations amounted to. Also as far as appears, this was all the tax that the people were required to pay, and a fifth of the produce is far less than the amount of all the taxes in many countries that boast of their liberty. Besides, whatever were the new regulations introduced by Joseph, the people seem

seem to have been satisfied with them, and to have thought them favourable.

21. This he probably did in order to break their attachment to any particular part of the country, and thereby prevent their complaints.

22. We see from this that not only was there a distinct order of men employed in religious offices, but that they had a maintenance independent of whatever lands they possessed, whenever they proved insufficient for their support, which must have been from the revenues of the country.

27. It is evident from the directions that were given about marking the houses of the Israelites, to distinguish them from those of the Egyptians, at the institution of the passover, that they were not at that time confined to one part of the country, but lived intermixed with the other inhabitants; the land of Goshen having, no doubt, proved too small for them:

29. Houbigant thinks that the seventh verse of the next chapter ought to follow this.

30. It was not only a natural wish in Jacob to be buried with his fathers, but it was also a method of ascertaining his claim to this purchase, and to draw the attention of his posterity to it.

31. What was the meaning of Jacob thus bowing himself is uncertain; perhaps it was to express his assent and satisfaction; or since the word may signify *a bed*, as well as *a staff* (which is thought to be the more probable meaning) by a change of the vowels only, it may only mean that, after this transaction, which had,

no doubt, exhausted him, he reclined on the bed on which he had lain.

Ch. XLVIII. 5. Tho' we have no previous intimation of it, Jacob must have been conscious to himself that he spake from particular inspiration ; since what he delivered was prophetical, and was verified by the events, long after the time of Moses who wrote this book.

6. This was a regulation in favour of Joseph. For tho' his name would be, as it were, lost, he would give names to two tribes ; and consequently his portion would be twice as much as that of any of his brethren. Jacob mentions Reuben and Simeon as his oldest sons. The two sons of Joseph were to be the founders of two distinct tribes, as respectable as those of his other sons ; and whatever children Joseph might have afterwards, they were to belong to one or other of these two. But he had no more.

7. The reason of his mentioning Joseph's mother does not appear. As she died before she had brought him any more than two sons, it might be some reason for giving her offspring another tribe.

12. *They bowed themselves.* MSS.

16. It is evident that Jacob considered the person whom he denominates *an angel*, as the same with the Supreme Being himself, whose representative he must have been.

19. It appears from fact, but long after the time of Moses, that the tribe of Ephraim was much more considerable than that of Manasseh, tho', next to that of Judah, this was as numerous as any of the twelve. E-
phraim

phraim was the most considerable of the ten tribes that revolted from the family of David, and formed a separate kingdom.

20. This explains the meaning of the blessing of Abraham, which was expressed in a similar manner.

22. This must have been the same piece of ground which he had bought of Hamor the father of Shechem, Gen. xxiii, 19. It is probable, therefore, that it had been taken from him, and he had recovered it by force of arms. Tho' Jacob himself does not appear to have been warlike, his sons might be so.

Ch XLIX. 1. Jacob must have had a particular revelation concerning the future state of each of his sons' descendants, tho' we have no account of the communication of it.

4. Instead of resembling a *pillar*, the main support of his family, which an eldest son might be expected to be, he was like *water*, which when poured out of a vessel, flows away. As a reason for this, his having polluted his father's bed is mentioned with peculiar indignation. In this, and in the prediction concerning Simeon and Levi, we see that the conduct of persons is sometimes ordered by Divine providence to affect their posterity.

6. *Slew the men, and in their self will they destroyed the princes. K.*

7. *And their confederacy. SAM.*

Jacob expresses still more indignation against the conduct of Simeon and Levi for their treachery and cruelty to the Shechemites, and his predictions have the air of a curse, rather than that of a blessing. Notwithstanding

standing this, the dispersion of the Levites through all the other tribes was, on the whole, perhaps an advantage to them, as well as to the nation in general ; and the priests, the only permanently honourable class of men in the nation, were all from Levi.

The tribe of Simeon had no separate portion of land allotted to it, but only a part of that which fell to the lot of Judah. Not having room there, they seem to have emigrated and settled where they could. Five hundred of them went to mount Seir and settled there. 1 Chron. iv. 39—42. The Jews also say that many of this tribe became schoolmasters, and were dispersed through all the other tribes in that capacity.

8. In this prediction concerning Judah there is an allusion to the signification of his name, which is *praise*, This was to be the tribe from which their princes would finally be descended ; but this did not appear in the time of Moses, who recorded this prophecy, and probably alludes principally to a time yet future, when the sovereignty of the country will be given to a descendant of David, who was of the tribe of Judah.

9. This is an allusion to the habits of the lion, who lies down after having secured and devoured his prey ; and being vigorous, it is then peculiarly hazardous to rouse him.

10. *From his standards.* SAM. not *fect*.

This verse has been very variously interpreted. As it appears from other prophecies that the sceptre is not finally to depart from Judah, and when it did so for a time, at the Babylonish captivity, no Messiah appeared, the sense that is commonly affixed to it, cannot

be

be the true one. This I would render. *The scepter shall never depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from his feet, tho' he shall go to Shiloh, and to it shall be the gathering of the people.* This translation is from the *Theological Repository*, Vol. 4, p. 573, where I have given reasons for supposing that *Shiloh* signifies a place so called, and not a person. We find no proper prophecy concerning the Messiah (who has been generally thought to be designated by the title Shiloh) till the time of the later kings of Judah. Then that title was never made use of, nor is there any reference to this passage as a prophecy of the Messiah in the New testament. The meaning seems to be that tho' the assembling of the people on all public occasions would be at Shiloh, which was a place in the tribe of Ephraim, yet the pre-eminence of all the tribes would be in Judah.

12. In this language abundance of both wine and milk are predicted to be the lot of this tribe.

13. The tribe of Zabulon had their inheritance in the northern parts of the land of Canaan, where there were good harbours for ships on the Mediterranean. It extended also to the sea of Tiberias, which being navigated, no doubt, had harbours likewise.

14. The translation of this word is very uncertain. The term also does not imply any thing contemptible in the East, as it does with us. Instead of *two burdens*, some render it *between two barriers*; and this lot lay in a fine valley between Zabulon and Manasseh, divided from both by a chain of high grounds.

15. This by the Greek translators is rendered *becomes a husbandman*, and perhaps on that account these
of

of this tribe were able to pay large contributions for the support of the state.

16. This is an allusion to the name of Dan, which signifies a *judge*; intimating that tho' Dan was the son of a concubine, he would not on that account be inferior to his brethren.

17. How this was verified in the event does not appear. The meaning is, that in war he would act more by stratagem than open force, taking his enemy by surprise, and recovering any advantage he might seem to have over him.

The word rendered an *adder*, is the *cerastes*

18. This exclamation makes an interruption in the prophecy, for which no reason appears. Perhaps having proceeded thus far, and being exhausted, he might purposely make a pause, and utter this ejaculatory prayer.

19. Here is an allusion to the name of Gad, which signifies a *troop*. Those of this tribe were exposed to the sudden incursions of the Moabites and Ammonites, for which they might not always be sufficiently prepared; but they might afterwards recover from their consternation, and make the enemy repent of their invasion. This was verified in the history of Jephtha, who recovered his country from the oppression of the Ammonites.

20. The inheritance of Asher was about mount Carmel, where there was a delicious valley.

21. The lot of Naphthali was near to Lebanon, which might suggest the idea of beautiful branching trees; as the passage ought to be rendered; as it is in the

LXX, and other ancient versions, *A luxuriant shoot, producing in its fruit what is beautiful.*

22. Here too we have an allusion to the name of Joseph, signifying *increase*; and as the ancestor of two tribes, he is justly compared to a tree planted in a garden, and near to a well, which enables it to throw out luxuriant branches. This prediction must have appeared very unlikely to be verified, when Joseph had only two sons, and all his brothers several.

23. In this there may be an allusion to the ill offices of his brethren, and the superiority he acquired over them.

26. There is much obscurity in this prediction. The inheritance of Ephraim and Manasseh was in a hilly country, but very fruitful; and the blessing of Moses corresponds with that of Jacob. See Deut. xxxiii, 15. where he blesses them for the *chief things of the ancient mountains, and the precious things of the lasting hills.*

27. This is an intimation that the tribe of Benjamin would be of a warlike disposition; and that they were so is evident from their sustaining a most destructive war with all the other tribes, tho' they were conquered, and almost extirpated at last. Saul the first king of Israel, and a man of a warlike disposition, was of this tribe; but that they were particularly successful in their wars, does not appear. They continued in connection with the tribe of Judah; and being situated between that and the ten other tribes, it is probable that their skill and experience in war would be particularly exercised. It is observed that the Benjamites were very skilful in the use of the sling. Among them in Gibeah only it is said

said (Judges xx 16) *that there were seven hundred chosen men left handed, and that every one could sling stones to an hair's breadth, and not miss.*

32. This verse is omitted in the Vulgate, and Houbigant thinks it should follow v. 30.

33. He seems to have died a proper natural death, of mere old age, without sickness or pain.

Ch. L: 1. It was promised to Jacob that his son Joseph should close his eyes, which he, no doubt, did, as it was the custom of some near relation to do.

2. The Egyptians excelled in the art of embalming the dead. Many of their preserved bodies, called *mummies* are to be seen at this day, being brought as curiosities to the different countries of Europe. Diodorus Siculus says that their embalming took up more than thirty days.

3. He says that their mourning for the dead kings was seventy two days.

10. Whether Atad be the name of a place, or of a person, is uncertain. A person of that name might have given his name to the place. Seven days was the usual time of a public mourning among the Jews in a later age. See 1 Sam. xxxvi. 13 Eccles xxvii. 13 Judith, xvi, 29. And their festivals, on occasion of a marriage, were of the same continuance. Gen. xxix, 27:

15. *Joseph's brethren were afraid when their father was dead.* Conj. P.

16. They might think that Joseph had spared them out of respect to their father; but it soon appeared that the suspicion was ill founded. His generosity had not

depended on that circumstance, but arose from his own excellent disposition.

17. *For I fear God.* Comp. Ho.

22. *Were born in the days of Joseph.* Sam.

25. Joseph did not desire to be carried immediately to Canaan, as his father had been ; but his being kept unburied with a view to it, would preserve on the minds of his countrymen the belief of their destination, and shew his own faith in the promise of God to his ancestors. It is probable that all the sons of Jacob followed the example of Joseph in this respect; and this seems to have been the opinion of the Jews in general, since Stephen on his trial says (Acts xvii. 15) 16, *Jacob died, and our fathers, and were carried over unto Shechem.*

26. He lived fifty four years after the death of his father, and died one hundred and forty four years before the departure of his countrymen out of Egypt. Of the kings that reigned in Egypt in this interval, we have no certain account.

NOTES ON

EXODUS.

THIS book contains a continuation of the Israelitish history, and has its name from the principal circumstance recorded in it, viz. the deliverance of the nation from their servitude in Egypt. The contents are of the most interesting nature ; being an account of the wonderful displays of divine power in this deliverance, the communication of the law from mount Sinai, and all the particulars of their civil constitution of government, which separated the Israelites from all other nations of the world, and made them *the peculiar people of God*, from whom the knowledge of all religious truth was to be derived to the rest of mankind.

Ch. I. 1, Moses begins this book with an account of the number of Jacob's family at the time of his going into Egypt, to shew how wonderfully they had increased during their residence there, notwithstanding the grievous oppression to which they had been subjected; and therefore that the promise of God to Abraham and Jacob had been abundantly fulfilled, viz. that in that country they would become a great nation.

7. Notwithstanding the oppression of the Israelites, they must have been, on the whole, well accommodated, and especially have had a sufficiency of wholesome food, or this amazing increase would have been impossi-

ble. For tho' it is not beyond the course of nature, and therefore not miraculous, it is perhaps the most extraordinary thing of the kind that is so well authenticated. For in the space of two hundred and fifteen years they increased from seventy males to about two millions. After an increase at such an amazing rate as this, it is no wonder that about the time of the birth of Moses, which was one hundred and thirty five years after their arrival, the Egyptians began to be alarmed at their numbers.

8. Many kings, no doubt, must have died in the interval above mentioned, and the history of Joseph could not have been absolutely forgotten in the country. The meaning therefore, must be that the kings, who reigned afterwards had not that respect for him, or his people, that the former kings had shewn.

9. This could not be strictly true; but, increasing as they had done, it might have been apprehended that it would be so at no great distance of time.

11. It was thought that by hard labour, and hard usage, they would be rendered less prolific. And in general slaves so treated are so far from increasing, that in all countries their numbers continually diminish. But so numerous as the Israelites were already become, and living in families, mere labour would not incapacitate them so much as was expected. On the contrary, in all countries the poor, who look to nothing more than a bare subsistence, and have no idea of wealth or grandeur, increase the most; while the great families soonest become extinct. As no mention is here made of any buildings besides these *treasure cities*, or fortified

ed places, it is pretty evident that neither the pyramids nor the temples were built in this age.

Pithom is thought by Bochart to be the city that Herodotus calls *Patumos* in Arabia; and that part of Egypt next to Arabia is often so called. Rameses was in the land of Goshen, and sometimes gave a name to it.

15. These two must only have been the midwives of greatest note. The same directions were, no doubt, given to them all, and perhaps thro' these.

16. These *stools* were *stone troughs* (as the word signifies) containing water in which they received and washed, the new born children, and not any thing that the women to be delivered sat upon.

17. They saved the children not only out of respect to their nation, but in obedience to the law of God, which forbade the commission of murder.

19. Many of the Hebrew women, no doubt, were delivered without the assistance of the mid-wives. This is frequently the case in the East, and they say it is universally so with the natives of North America.

21. Their own families became numerous and prosperous.

22. Not succeeding with the midwives, the same orders were given to the Egyptians, to look out for, and put to death, all the male children of the Israelites. But tho' this cruel order might have been executed for some time, it could not have been so long. Aaron was but three years older than Moses; so that probably the order had not been given long before the birth of Moses;

and as the increase of the people after his birth appears to have been as great as it had been before, the order was either recalled, or was not executed.

Ch. II. 1. The father of Moses was Amram, the grand-son of Levi, and he married Jochebed of the tribe of Levi.

2. She had a son three years before, viz. Aaron, before this persecution began.

3. Rather than suffer the child to be taken from her, and thrown into the river, she contrived to give it a small chance for its life, by setting it afloat on the water. By this means, at least, she would not have the pain of seeing it perish. What must the mother have felt at this time, and how little did she suspect the great eminence to which this son, whose life she despaired of, would arrive? So wonderful are the ways of providence, and such confidence ought we to have in it, notwithstanding all appearances whatever, in life, and even in death. Vessels that float, and carry burdens, on the Nile, are still constructed of reeds, cemented with pitch.

4. This sister was, no doubt, Miriam. What must have been the anxiety and distress of the whole family at this time.

5. There is a tradition that this daughter of Pharaoh had been long married, but had no child.

8. Who can deny that there was a particular providence in the conduct of this discovery, considering the important part which this child was to act on the theatre of the world. But every man has an important part to act, or a part subordinate to, and connected with, something that is of importance to the whole. We cannot

not, therefore, doubt but that there is, in fact, as particular a providence attending every person, however obscure his situation in life may be. But so complex is the great scheme of providence, that it is but rarely that we can perceive, as in this case, what the intention of the Divine Being really is. It is probable that some inquiry had been made about providing a nurse for the child before the sister made this proposal, which was so well conducted, that she must have been of a reasonable age at this time.

9. We may easily conceive the joy with which the mother received her own child, and engaged to nurse it for hire.

10. Being considered as the son of Pharaoh's daughter, he had, no doubt, the best education that the country could give him. But all the real knowledge of this early age was not much. The word *Moses* is said to be a compound of two words in the Egyptian language which signify *to draw out of the water*. Josephus says that *Mo* signifies *water* in the language of Egypt. There is also a Hebrew word which signifies *to draw*, from which the name might be taken.

11. He was at this time forty years old, and must have been acquainted with his real parentage. His circumcision, must have shewn him that he was no Egyptian, and his attachment to his nation, if not to his religion, appears from the following circumstance.

12. By *smiting* must be meant using great violence. Perhaps they were fighting in consequence of the Isra-

elite making resistance to opposition ; and his life being in danger, Moses took his part. Whether the conduct of Moses was justifiable, or not, is not said.

15. In that part of Arabia which borders on Egypt many of the posterity of Abraham were settled, and among them he took refuge. •

16. In these primitive times the same person was both prince and priest. But tho' this Jethro might be the chief of a small tribe, he does not appear to have had much power, or to have been wealthy. His daughters attending the sheep, is however, no proof of a mean condition, since we have seen that this office was discharged by young women of very opulent families.

17. Wells of water appear to have been very scarce in this country, and there were frequent contentions about them, as we have seen in the history of Isaac.

18. This Reuel was probably the father of Jethro, and therefore the grandfather of these young women.

22. Gershom signifies *a desolate stranger*. Moses either did not marry till he had been a long time in this country, or his wife had been a long time without having any children ; for he continued forty years in it, and when he left it his children were very young.

23. The *cry coming up to God* does not necessarily imply that the people were in earnest in their supplications to God, but that it was very loud and general.

24. Here the feeling and conduct of men are ascribed to God, as on other similar occasions.

Ch. III. 1. Horeb seems to have been one of the summits of Mount Sinai.

2. This was the usual symbol of the divine presence to Moses and the Israelites, in their passage through the wilderness, and also at other times.

4. Tho' this appearance is called *an angel*, the speaker is no other than the Divine Being himself, as on other occasions in the preceding history.

5. Putting off the shoes is universally, in the East, considered as an expression of reverence, while the head is kept covered ; which is the reverse of our customs. The Mahometans always put off their shoes when they enter their mosques. The priests in the temple served barefoot.

10. God considered the Israelitish nation as his people in a peculiar sense ; and from this time to the present day they have been the objects of an extraordinary providence for the most important purposes, respecting the world at large, and not merely for their own sakes.

11. Moses having lived forty years in Arabia, must have given up all thoughts of his relation to his nation in Egypt. He had even, as will be seen, discontinued the rite of circumcision ; and therefore, being, besides, a man exceedingly diffident of himself, he cannot be supposed to have undertaken a charge of this important and difficult nature without some extraordinary impulse and assistance. And the most positive encouragement from the Divine Being himself was barely sufficient for the purpose.

12. That they should serve God in that place at some distant time, could not answer the purpose of a token

token of any thing *at that time* ; but it would be a confirmation of his faith when it should take place.

13. As Moses was to speak in the name of God, he inquires concerning the appellation that he was to make use of ; tho' it might be thought that what the Divine Being himself had used in the beginning of the address to him, viz. the *God of his fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*, would have been sufficient to designate the person who sent him ; and he had at the same time given sufficient proof of his ability to perform the promises he had formerly made to their fathers, and also to Moses. Whether there was any particular propriety in the question or not, the answer is very pertinent. For the Divine Being characterizes himself as self sufficient and immutable, whose purposes never change. For this much is implied in *I am what I am*.

18. *Jehovah the God of the Hebrews is called upon us* (that is, we are called by his name, we are his servants) *therefore let us go*. SAM. MSS. K.

19. *Unless with a strong hand*. SAM.

22. *Shall ask of her neighbour*. It is the same word that in Ps. cxxii. 6, is rendered *pray*. *Pray for the peace of Jerusalem*.

Ch. IV. 3. This was a miracle of a remarkable kind, the instantaneous change of a piece of lifeless wood into a living animal, an effect which could only have been produced by the omnipotent author and lord, of all nature ; and being performed on the staff, which Moses always had in his hand, it was ready on all occasions, without any particular preparation.

6. This

6. This was another extraordinary miracle, which also might be performed without any preparation.

9. In Egypt the water of the river was always at hand, and therefore this miracle might be easily had recourse to, if the other should fail to produce the desired effect.

10. Moses had probably some imperfection in his articulation.

13. The backwardness shewn by Moses to comply with the orders of God, after the very particular encouragement that had been given him, is very extraordinary, and clearly shews his great aversion to the undertaking, and his dread of the consequence of it. The divine condescension in bearing with this weakness is peculiarly striking. Notwithstanding his incomprehensible greatness and majesty, he from the first treated his creature man, whose frame he knew, according to his nature and capacity; and permitted men in these early ages to conceive of him as a Being exactly resembling themselves, but only infinitely their superior in knowledge and power.

14. Moses's brother meeting him in the manner here foretold would be a farther confirmation, if he wanted any, of its being God with whom he had this intercourse.

18. Moses concealing from his father in law the interview that he had with God, when no secrecy appears to have been enjoined him with respect to it, shows a most extraordinary and amiable modesty.

24. The person who thus met Moses evidently represented the Supreme Being; and as the terms *meeting him*,

him, and endeavouring to kill him, naturally apply to human beings, it is probable that this appearance was in the form of man, as well as that which appeared to Abraham, together with two others, and to Jacob when he wrestled with him. Why there should have been such an appearance at this time we cannot discover. As an Israelite, it had certainly been the duty of Moses to circumcise his children at the eighth day after their birth. This, however, had been neglected, and probably had not been intended. As nothing appears to have been said on this occasion we do not see how the wife of Moses understood the meaning of what she saw. But as she did what was necessary to save the life of her husband, it is plain that the account of the transaction is imperfect.

It is the custom with the Jews to call the child that is newly circumcised חתן, which likewise signifies *bridegroom*, or *husband*. Accordingly the sense that some of them put upon this passage is not that Zippora complained of her husband on account of this painful and bloody rite, but only said with respect to the child, *A husband is given to us by this blood of the circumcision*. Spencer, p. 61. Or as the words seem to have been addressed to the child, the true meaning will be, *Thou art now to me a joyful circumcised son*. See Pilkington p. 200, and the *Universal History*.

27. Moses could not have gone far before this meeting with his brother; for it was near the place where God had spoken to him.

30. It is evident that Moses and Aaron shewed all the three signs they were empowered to exhibit, tho' it is

is not said that the people, or their leaders, expressed any hesitation to believe in their divine mission after the first of them.

31. *And the people rejoiced.* LXX.

Ch. V. 3. It was the belief of all the world that the gods sometimes interposed in the affairs of men, and commissioned particular persons to deliver messages in their name, and that they punished with various judgments those who refused to comply with their demands. The heathen histories abound with stories of this kind, so that this account of Moses would not appear impossible to Pharaoh.

7. It is probable that these bricks were baked in the sun, and that straw was mixed with the clay to prevent their cracking, and falling asunder.

23. Nothing having as yet been done by way of proof that Moses had a divine commission, it was quite natural for Pharaoh to behave as he did. The Israelites also naturally complained that, in consequence of the interference of Moses, their condition had been made worse than it had been before ; and Moses, from vexation and disappointment, uttered this hasty complaint, tho' he had been apprized that Pharaoh would not at first pay any attention to him.

Ch. VI. 3. According to the preceding part of this history, the name Jehovah was well known even to Adam and Eve, as well as to Abraham. For Eve says (Gen. iv. 1) *I have gotten a man from Jehovah*, and to Abraham God says, (Gen. xv. 7) *I am Jehovah who brought thee out of the land of the Chaldees*. Abraham must also have been acquainted with the name Jehovah from his calling

calling a place *Yehovah Firsch*. Gen. xl. 14. There is therefore an apparent difficulty in ascertaining the true meaning of this passage. It is generally thought that tho' the name itself had not been unknown, its signification had not been *verified*; this name, implying that God, being unchangeably the same, he would certainly fulfill his promise, which till this time he had not done, but now would do it in the deliverance of his people from their bondage in Egypt, and making them a great nation, as he had engaged to do. That this is the meaning is probable from v. vi, where God says *Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am Jehovah; and I will bring you forth from the burdens of the Egyptians, &c.*

There is much uncertainty with respect to terms עֶשֶׂה rendered *omnipotent*. In the Ethiopic the same word signifies a *benign, bounteous, God*. GEDDES.

12. The term *uncircumcised* being with the Israelites a term of reproach, was applied to any thing that was imperfect, and not good of its kind; so that a faulty articulation was called *uncircumcised lips*.

16. There is no account of the age of any of the sons of Jacob, except of Joseph and Levi; and it appears that Levi, tho' much older than Joseph, survived him twenty seven years. Moses proceeds to give a more particular account of his own ancestors, which was natural.

20. Tho' a marriage in this degree of relationship was forbidden afterwards, it was not unlawful at that time. She might have been his sister by another wife.

Or

Or by *sister* may be meant a female relation in general, in any degree. In the LXX it is *his father's brother's daughter*.

21. Moses gives a more particular account of the family of his brother than of his own, that being of much more importance to the nation, as it comprized the order of *priests*; whereas his own descendants ranked with the common Levites. Had Moses been a man of ambition, and his institutions been of his own devising, he would never have given the family of his brother the preference to his own.

Ch. VII. 1. In order to encourage Moses to speak with boldness to Pharaoh, God places him in the light of a superior being, even as a god with respect to him; and to raise his character still higher, he gave him a prophet, who should be subordinate to him, and deliver his messages to Pharaoh.

3. The meaning of God's being said to harden the heart of Pharaoh, is simply a prediction, that he would be exceedingly obstinate from his own natural disposition. For whatever comes to pass according to the usual laws and course of nature, is frequently in the scriptures ascribed to God, the author of nature. In one sense every thing is of God, good and evil, natural and moral. But this does not take away the distinction between moral good and evil, or the propriety and use of rewards and punishments.

5. One great object in the plan of providence respecting the Hebrew nation, indeed the greatest, is to convince the whole world of the supremacy of the one true God, and thereby establish the *true* principles of

religion, and thus lay the best foundation for the virtue and happiness of all the human race.

10. No miracle had hitherto been exhibited to Pharaoh, and he would naturally demand to see one, as a proof of God having really sent Moses.

11. This was, no doubt, effected by some slight of hand, the rods being withdrawn, and serpents substituted in their places; and this they might do, as they knew beforehand what Moses had done, and no doubt imagined it to have been done by such tricks as theirs. It is probable that Moses himself was imposed upon by them, and thought that by some supernatural power their rods had undergone the same change that his had done.

18. This would convince all the spectators that, by whatever power the rods had been changed into serpents, that by which Moses worked *his* miracles was superior to that by which the magicians had performed theirs. And the magicians themselves, who must have known that they had worked no real miracle, must have been astonished to see their serpents swallowed up by that of Moses, and, by its becoming a rod as before, entirely to vanish.

21. The magnitude of this miracle must have been a satisfactory proof that the hand of God was in it. By slight of hand the water contained in a basin might be conveyed away, or something might be secretly infused into it, which would give it the appearance of blood. But no artifice, or power, of man, could produce this change in all the water of a great river like the Nile, and in large ponds or reservoirs of water. This miracle

cle had another use. The Nile was considered by the Egyptians as a divinity, and therefore this miracle was calculated to shew that the God of Moses was superior to theirs.

22. As the waters in the river, and all other great bodies of water were already changed, no great quantity could remain for these magicians to exercise their art upon. What they did was, however, sufficient to encourage Pharaoh in his obstinacy.

25. The long continuance of this inconvenience would convince the Egyptians that it was no slight or transient change in the water of the river, such as might have taken place from natural causes, with which Moses might have been acquainted, but produced by a real interposition of divine power, whether it was really changed into blood, or any thing offensive resembling blood. Whether this plague was removed at the request of Pharaoh is not said.

Ch VIII. 6. The water of the river having been very offensive, would probably be better prepared for producing the frogs; but no doubt the production of them was miraculous, as no frogs previously existing in the country could have produced the vast number here described.

9. *And Moses said unto Pharaoh, Fix the time, LXX.*

11. The fixing of the time for the removal of the frogs would be a fair test of the reality of the miracle, as a divine judgment.

12. By Moses petitioning for the removal of the frogs, he seems to have made the promise to Pharaoh

without having been directly authorized to do so, but depending on the general promise of God to support him.

17. Lice are a very troublesome and offensive insect, and their arising from the dust, where lice never naturally come, proves the production of them to have been miraculous. But it is more probable that these insects were *gnats*, as in the LXX.

18. They had recourse to their usual arts, but did not succeed, the reason of which does not appear. It is evident, however, that they began to be alarmed at the magnitude and dreadful nature of these miracles, so as to be sensible that they proceeded from a power superior to any by which they had operated, and which they could not counteract. For they had not been able to remove any of the plagues with which the country had been afflicted.

19. The magicians having acknowledged that the hand of God was in this judgment, it might have been expected that Pharaoh would have begun to relent. He might, however, have thought that the evil, from whatever cause it proceeded, might not be of long continuance, or greater than might be borne. And for a king to yield to such a person as Moses, one of the enslaved Israelites, would have hurt his pride.

21. These insects, whatever they were, seem to have been not only troublesome, but destructive; for it is said, v. 24, that *the land was destroyed by them*. On what it was that they preyed is not said. Dr. Geddes supposes them to have been *beetles*.

22. The

22. The land of Goshen, had, no doubt, been spared in the former plagues, tho' no mention is made of that circumstance in the narrative. But as the preceding plague had some relation to the river, on which the inhabitants of Goshen did not altogether depend, it was less extraordinary that they should not have been affected by them. But these insects preying probably on herbage, might be expected to abound in the land which was famed for its rich pastures ; and yet it was intirely free from them.

26. They must have sacrificed oxen, sheep, and goats, which some, if not all the Egyptians, revered as divine.

32. This was contrary to an express stipulation. Here it is said not that God hardened his heart, but that he hardened it himself, which sufficiently explains the other mode of speaking ; for no doubt the cause of his obstinacy was the same at all times. There was, therefore, no miraculous interposition of providence in the case.

Ch. IX. 5. On this, as on former occasions, not only was the plague foretold, but the time of its infliction exactly fixed ; and tho' there could not have been any natural reason for it, it was to fall on the Egyptians only, and not on the Israelites, all which circumstances clearly proved that the hand of the God of Israel was in it.

6. By *all* in this place must only be meant very many ; for it appears soon afterwards, that the Egyptians had cattle, and in considerable numbers, when it is not probable that they could have replenished their stock.

This, however, was a more serious affliction than any of the preceding, which were more offensive, and troublesome, than detrimental.

7. Notwithstanding the greatness of this plague, and its having been expressly foretold, Pharaoh continued obdurate. He might think that this calamity, great as it was, happened in the usual course of nature, as such things had been before.

10. There was no more natural connection between the sprinkling of these ashes and the plague that followed, than the striking the dirt of the earth with the production of lice or gnats; so that it must have been sufficiently apparent that the hand of God was at work.

11. Had this plague been produced by any natural or magical, these magicians, who must have known as much of those things as Moses, would, no doubt, have counteracted the effects of it, and especially have taken care to guard themselves from it. But it plainly appeared that they had no such power.

12. This disease not being mortal, and Pharaoh himself not, as far as appears, being affected by it, he still would not relent.

16. It was not possible to have given fairer warning than this; but as they were only words, and nothing immediately followed, Pharaoh does not appear to have been moved by them.

18. Hail, and even rain, is very uncommon in Egypt, which is watered by the overflowing of the Nile.

20. Tho' Pharaoh was obstinate, it appears that many of the people were alarmed, and had been properly impressed with the preceding miracles.

29. A plague so great and uncommon as this forced this acknowledgment from Pharaoh. But Moses, judging from what had passed, and from what God had apprized him of, tells him that he would not hold to his present resolution; and this was verified by the event.

31. It appears from this circumstance, that this plague was in the month of Abib, or March, when barley in Egypt is nearly ripe, but not wheat.

32. Dr. Shaw supposes that the word translated *rye* should have been *rice*. The same word is rendered *fitches*. Ezek. iv, 9.

Ch. X. 6. Perceiving, probably, that Pharaoh gave no serious attention to him, or shewed by his behaviour that he was not terrified by his threats, Moses, who had by this time acquired more confidence, turns from him with indignation, without waiting for his answer.

7. Tho' Pharaoh was obstinate, yet the continuance of the plague, and the intrepidity of Moses, had made some impression on the people, and no doubt on Pharaoh himself, tho' he was unwilling to shew it.

10. The meaning of this language is not very intelligible. It looks as if he meant to shew his contempt of what God could do for them, or against him. Or by *evil being before them*, or *in their view*, he might mean to charge them with some bad design, as that of a revolt, which tho' they did not avow, was certainly justifiable.

15. Nothing in the common course of nature is so destructive as the ravages of large swarms of locusts; which are not unfrequent in the East. Nothing that is

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green escapes them ; and they often come in such numbers that all endeavours to destroy them are in vain.

19. As the East wind brought those locusts, a West wind was proper to carry them away. When they die upon the ground, the stench that they occasion is intolerable, and is said to be the cause of pestilential diseases. They were, therefore, carried into the sea, where they did no harm. This complete removal of the locusts was as miraculous as the bringing of them.

20. Swarms of locusts not being uncommon in the East, and coming but rarely, Pharaoh might think he had nothing more to fear from them.

23. What was the immediate or physical cause of this extraordinary darkness is not said. It must have been such as had never been known in Egypt. But if it was occasioned by a thick fog, it might have been expected to extend to the land of Goshen, whither, however, it did not go. It is not said by what means this darkness was removed ; but it could not have been till after the next interview of Moses with Pharaoh. Had the darkness been dispersed before this time, he would hardly have sent for him at all. For this plague was not threatened beforehand, like the others, and therefore might more easily have been considered as a natural, tho' extraordinary phenomenon. There, must, however, have been something uncommonly terrifying in it, to have produced such an effect. For Pharaoh at at this time sent for Moses of his own accord, and expressed his willingness to let the Israelites go on certain conditions.

26. As Pharaoh was determined to keep the Israelites in a state of servitude, it is no wonder that he was alarmed at this proposal of all of them departing, and taking with them every thing belonging to them, tho' he knew he had no right to detain them, and they were abundantly justified in their endeavours to escape by all lawful means.

29. Moses evidently acquired courage in consequence of being the messenger of God, and of finding himself supported as he had been, so as to be what had been promised to him *a God* to Pharaoh, a person of superior character and authority.

Ch. XI. 8. It does not appear that the Israelites made any promise of repayment of what was thus given them, nor is it said on what pretence it was demanded ; for this seems to have been the case. It was now sufficiently evident that they meant to leave the country ; and if they had not, there could not have been any apparent use in borrowing such articles of gold, silver, and other valuables as were delivered to them. They must have been things that they had not been accustomed to, and therefore what they could not have had any particular use for. To have pretended that they wanted them for the worship of their God, could not have imposed upon any person. It seems as if the Egyptians in general were terrified, and that as the God of the Israelites had afflicted them with so many plagues, they were desirous of appeasing him by giving his people every thing of value in their possession. And considering their long severe and unjust servitude, there was nothing given to them to which they were not in equity fully intitled.

4. This was probably delivered at the close of the preceding interview with Pharaoh, after he had said that they should see his face no more. The mention that is here made [of the greatness of Moses, or the awful light in which the people in general considered him, supplies a good reason for Pharaoh's not apprehending him, or doing any thing to him. It is no wonder that his person should have been regarded as sacred, and not to be violated.

5. It is not easy to conceive an event more evidently miraculous, or more awful in its nature; than this of the sudden death, without any previous illness, of all the first born in a whole nation, without any distinction of age or rank, and that of their cattle also; and of the first born only, and this distinctly announced beforehand. If, as the magicians said, the finger of God was in any of the preceding plagues, much more was it conspicuous in this. And accordingly it had its full effect. The Israelites were suffered to go, and even hurried away, without any conditions whatever. In the state of mind in which the Egyptians then were, they probably thought of nothing farther than of getting rid of them, and without any expectation, or desire, of their return.

8. At this time Moses was far from being intimidated by the presence or threats of Pharaoh. On the contrary, he could not suppress his indignation at his conduct; and yet such was the awe with which his behaviour had inspired every body, that the king seems to have borne this indignant language without any reply.

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10. This being only a threat, delivered when Pharaoh was exceedingly provoked, he persisted in his obstinacy. When any person has publicly declared a resolution, tho' he may afterwards wish he had not done it, he thinks his *honour* engaged not to depart from it; and if this be felt by private persons, much more must it be by princes. On this account the laws of the Medes and Persians were never repealed, and the orders of their kings never recalled.

Ch. XII. 1. This must have been some time before the denunciation of the last plague, which took place on the fourteenth day of the month, viz. before the tenth day. What the Israelites had to do on that day required some preparation. This previous warning would also serve to shew the distinct foreknowledge of the Divine Being, in adapting their conduct to a future occasion. Whether this particular direction to chuse the paschal lamb on the tenth day of the month was observed afterwards, is uncertain.

3. The lamb, or the kid, might be appointed for the passover, to oppose the superstition of the Egyptians, who had a peculiar veneration for those animals, and refrained from eating either of them.

— *Lanatis abstinet omnis,*
Mensa. Nefas illic factum jugulare capellæ.

JUV. xv. 11.

The male might be chosen with the same view, for the Egyptians thought that the females were the most acceptable to their deities, so that they had recourse to them when they did not succeed with the sacrifice of males. It is also observable that on the tenth day of

the month in which the passover was celebrated, the Egyptian festival in honour of the ram began, and that the middle of the month was the time of their greatest festivity on that occasion. *Speacer*, p. 296.

That this festival had some peculiar reference to the heathen religions is probable from this consideration, that the more pious princes of Judah who succeeded idolatrous ones, laid particular stress on the celebration of this festival, as Hezekiah and Josiah.

6. The time here prescribed was from noon to sun set. The evening sacrifice was generally killed about our three in the afternoon, and the time immediately after this, and till sun setting, was employed in killing the paschal lambs.

7. It appears from this that, in some parts of Egypt, the Israelites lived intermixed with the Egyptians. Otherwise there would have been no occasion for this mark to distinguish their houses.

8. The reason why the paschal lamb was directed to be roasted, rather than boiled, must have been because it required less time and apparatus ; and every circumstance of the ceremonial was calculated to give the idea of *haste*. For this reason the bread was not to be leavened, and the herbs, or the sauce with which the lamb was to be eaten, were not to be of the more delicate kind, which it would have required time to collect, but the most ordinary and common ones, tho' less pleasing to the taste ; and the lamb was to be roasted whole, without giving themselves time to cut it up. They were not even to break any of the bones afterwards

wards, for the sake of getting the marrow, which was considered as a delicacy.

The eating of it raw, tho' that would have given the idea of still greater haste, seems to have been forbidden with a view to some rites of the heathen religion, in which they ate the entrails of the animals they sacrificed quite raw, and while they were warm, with the blood running out of their mouths.

The purtenance, or the inwards, were to be roasted at the same time, not only to imply haste, but probably to prevent any superstitious use of those parts, such as was made by the heathens, who prognosticated from the inspection of the heart, and especially the liver. The not keeping any part of the lamb till the next day, was probably also with a view to prevent any superstitious use of what had been appropriated to an act of religion, which was done by some of the heathens with respect to their sacrifices.

11. All these circumstances denote haste in those who ate of the paschal lamb.

12. The executing of judgment against all the gods of Egypt, probably means that these judgments on the people would take place, notwithstanding all the assistance they could derive from their gods, so that it would be apparent that the God of the Israelites was superior to them all. Or by *gods* in this place may be meant magistrates, men of power and influence, on whom the judgments were actually inflicted. For it does not appear that any thing was done to affect in a direct manner the gods of Egypt, tho' it has been said, but without
any

any sufficient authority, that all the idols of Egypt were broken in pieces on this memorable night.

13. No event could have been more fully authenticated than this. The deliverance was foretold some time before it took place, the very night was fixed upon, and a particular ceremonial appointed to be performed on that very night, and directed to be repeated as a memorial of it every year, at the same time afterwards. The history of it was also written at the time, while the reason of the practice must have been known to the whole nation, and this rite has continued to be practised by the Hebrew nation, without any considerable interruption, to this day.

21. The first paschal lambs were killed in each private house; but afterwards it was required to be done at the place which God should chuse for the national worship, and no where else.

22. Why hyssop should have been used for the purpose of purgation, as we find it to have been, does not appear; but it seems to have been used for cleansing.

29. It is computed that all the plagues of Egypt took place in one month. *Un. Hist.*

33 The terror with which all the people of Egypt must have been struck by this wonderful judgment, may be more easily conceived than expressed. They must, no doubt, have been eager to see all the Israelites depart, and without any wish for their return.

36. Rameses was a city in the land of Goshen, which the Israelites had been compelled to assist in building. If there were of the Israelites six hundred thousand men capable of bearing arms, there must have been
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four times as many in all, which was a great increase in the space of little more than two hundred years, from seventy males that went into Egypt.

38. This mixed multitude probably consisted of those Egyptians who chose to accompany the Israelites; some, no doubt, from a conviction of the superiority of their God, to those of their nation, and others from having intermarried with them, and not chusing to be separated from their near relations. That the Israelites must have had much cattle is evident from the tending of them having been their original occupation, and their having been settled in the land of Goshen, as most adapted to their occasions. How they found food for their cattle in the wilderness does not appear. It was not, however, altogether destitute of herbage. It was near mount Sinai, where they continued a considerable time, that Moses fed the flocks of Jethro. The cattle they could not keep, they would probably sell to some other people.

40. *In Egypt and in the land of Canaan.* SAM. and LXX, It is certain that this term of years commenced with the promise of God to Abraham on his coming to Canaan.

46. This circumstance was an indication of haste. After eating the flesh, they had not time, as was observed before, to break the bones to get out the marrow.

49. This was a mark of great liberality in the Hebrew system. Any stranger might be incorporated into the nation by conforming to the rites of their religion, and thereby might become intitled to all the same privileges

privileges with themselves. This was far from being the case with the Hindoos, or any antient heathen nation.

Ch. XIII. 2 This was another method of preserving the memory of all the principal circumstances in this wonderful interposition of divine power. All the first born of men and of cattle of the Egyptians having died in one night, the Divine Being was pleased to claim all the first born of the Israelites as *his*, to be disposed of as he should think proper. Those of men, and of unclean animals, not proper for sacrifice, were to be redeemed. This was an indirect disapprobation of human sacrifices, which were then common in the heathen world.

4. The month of Abib, corresponding in part to our March and April, was that in which barley began to ear. In this month, the first of their future year, they were to present their first ripe corn. If none was then ready, they intercalated a month.

6. *Six days shalt thou eat.* SAM.

9. This was a solemn injunction to inform their children of the reason of this institution, that it might be kept in perpetual remembrance; and a festival of seven days continuance was appointed for the purpose, to give them more leisure to attend to it.

17. Tho' the deliverance of the Israelites was by a series of miracles, and the same powerful hand could, no doubt, have carried them in any way to the country that was promised them; yet where natural means were sufficient, recourse was not had to supernatural ones. They were, therefore, conducted in such a manner, as natural reason would have directed. There was, however, another reason why the Israelites were detained so long

long in the wilderness, viz. to give time for their instruction in the new system of laws and religious institutions to which they were to conform, and to make trial of their obedience. During all this time they were, in a great measure, sustained by a miracle, viz. the manna, to preserve upon their minds a sense of God's constant attention to them, and government over them, as his peculiar people.

18. They did not march in a disorderly manner, as persons flying, or driven out of the country, but in regular order, at least the men who were capable of bearing arms; and as the word denoting this signifies the number *fifty*, it is probable that they marched in divisions of fifty in front, so as to form themselves into companies of *fifties*, hundreds, and thousands; by means of which the sum of the whole would be easily taken.

The same word (עֶשְׂרִים) is used Josh. iv, 12. when it is said that *the children of Reuben, &c. passed over ARMED before the children of Israel*. It must, therefore, mean that they marched under regular officers; and in orderly manner, and probably with arms. For without some means of defence they could not have undertaken a journey into the wilderness, in the neighbourhood of warlike nations.

There have been different reasons assigned for this sea being denominated *Red*, when it has no more of that colour than any other part of the ocean. The most probable opinion is that it was first called the *sea of Edom*, the Edomites being settled near it, and Esau is said (Gen. xxv, 25) to have been *red like a hairy garment*. In the Hebrew this sea is always called *the sea of weeds*,

but Mr. Bruce says he never saw a weed in 'the Red sea. His opinion is that it was so called from the large white corals which cover its bottom, like plants on the land. *Travels*, p. 237.

Mr. Harris thinks that it originally denoted *the sea of the boundary*, the word generally signifying the *end*, *extremity*, or *hinder parts*. p. 76.

According to the antients the Red, or Erythræan sea, signifies all the Eastern ocean as far as India; and what we call the Red sea, is only a gulph, or arm, of it.

20. What stay they made at Succoth is not easy to determine. The place was probably about half way between Ramefes and the head of the Red sea. The wilderness of Etham is also called the wilderness of Shur. Ch. xv, 22.

21. This was the same appearance that was exhibited to Moses in the bush, and continued to be the symbol of the divine presence during the whole of their passage through the wilderness. It seems to have been an appearance similar to that of the Aurora Borealis, not luminous in the day time, but sufficiently so in the night.

Ch. XIV. 2. They were proceeding in a direct line towards Horeb, where God had said they were to perform their worship, and of course would have gone a little to the North of the Red sea; but they were ordered to turn to the right, and of course they would have the sea on their left hand. In this course they proceeded till they came to the place here mentioned, which is supposed to have been opposite to an opening in

in the chain of mountains that runs in the same direction with the coast. This Migdol was probably the same with a place that Herodotus calls Magdolus, and Jeremiah (Ch. XLIV. 1) Migdol; but the exact situation of this place, or that of Baalzephon, is unknown.

Pihahiroth is the mouth of the valley Badeah, which opens to the sea at Hiroth, a narrow slip of land where showers fall. Baal Zephon, or the god of the watch tower, was probably some idol temple, which might serve for a watch tower. Here the Red sea is something less than four leagues over, so that it might easily be passed in a night. *Bruce's Travels*, p. 233.

3. This sudden turn would naturally lead Pharaoh to conclude that they had mistaken their way, and therefore could not have a divine conductor; and this would encourage him to pursue them, when his consternation was a little abated; and then his rage, which always blinds the judgment, would be in proportion to his disappointment. This was their third day's journey.

7. *And all the horsemen of Egypt.* LXX, and thus the Hebrew itself may be rendered. C.

As the Israelites were six hundred thousand men capable of bearing arms, and many of them, no doubt, had arms, Pharaoh might think it necessary to bring out all the force that he could collect in the time. Many of the Israelites might have served in the Egyptian armies, and we have an account of an expedition made by one of the tribes into the country of the Philistines presently after their settlement in Egypt. For we read Chron. vii, 21. that some of the sons of Ephraim were slain by

the men of Geth, because they went to take their cattle ; on which occasion the father mourned many days, and his brethren went to comfort him. This, however, was prior to the oppression of the Israelites by the Egyptians. But tho' they were not wholly unacquainted with war, and it is not said that they were required to give up their arms, they must have been much inferior to the nations of Palestine in every thing relating to war.

8. They marched without fear, persuaded that they were conducted by their God.

9. This was the 20th of Nisan, towards evening.

12. It was natural for the Israelites, after having been so long under the power of Pharaoh, and finding that he had the courage to pursue them, with a force which they were not able to resist, without any visible way of escape, and without any express promise of deliverance, to be discouraged. But their sarcastic reflections on Moses, who had uniformly acted by divine direction, and who had been so wonderfully supported, is at least as unaccountable as the obstinacy of Pharaoh. The conduct of both arose from an excess of natural passion in extraordinary circumstances, without giving themselves sufficient time for reflection. Pharaoh saw no immediate cause of apprehension, and the Israelites had no immediate prospect of relief.

14. Moses had not at this time any knowledge of what God intended to do for them ; but he had a perfect confidence, that, agreeably to his general promise, he would open some way for their deliverance, and for the
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the destruction of their enemies. He, therefore, exhorts them to put their trust in God, and gave them no direction about defending themselves.

15. This seems to imply that, tho' Moses had shewn no despondence before the people, he had been more alarmed at their situation, and more impatient of their continuance in it, than it became him to have been.

16. The people were at this time not far from the sea, and were so shut up by the mountains, that they could only advance nearer to it ; and all that they had been given to expect before this time was that, in general, *God would be honoured upon Pharaoh, and all his host.* Ch. xiii, 4. From this, however, Moses justly inferred their defeat and destruction ; but this was the first intimation that he had of the manner in which it would be accomplished, and nothing more complete, or more astonishing, could have been imagined.

19. The cloud which was the symbol of the divine presence, and which had hovered over the foremost ranks of the Israelites, to shew them their way, now removed to their rear, and probably concealed them from the sight of the Egyptians.

20. As the night came on, this cloud continued to appear dark towards the Egyptians, but luminous, as before, to the Israelites ; so that they might see their way, as in the day time.

21. Whatever was the natural effect of this wind, it could not so divide the water as to enable any persons to walk through the sea. For it must have had much great-

er power over them than over the water. It must also have blown in one narrow track, to have caused the waters to rise on both sides of them. Tho' the wind is said to have been in this direction, it was not so strong as to prevent the people from marching over the bottom of the sea, which was probably very uneven, and therefore required much care, for such a multitude of persons of all ages, and encumbered with cattle and furniture. Diodorus Siculus says that there was a tradition among the Ichthiophagi, who lived near this sea, that in the time of their ancestors it had receded, and left the bottom quite dry, but afterwards returned to its former place. But they are not said to have reported any thing concerning the passing of any people through it.

23. The Egyptians seeing a plain path before them, would have no doubt but that where the Israelites marched, they could follow them, being much better prepared for it, tho' they might perceive it was where the sea had been before. Besides, being many, they would naturally encourage one another, the most cowardly being ashamed to shew their fears, and especially in the presence of the king, whose eagerness to overtake the fugitives they well knew. In all cases when a number of persons are together, they do things more rash and unreasonable than any of them would have done of themselves. This we see every day.

24. The night being divided into four parts called *watches*, as the day was into twelve hours, the morning watch must have been the last of the four. By the Lord *looking upon the host of the Egyptians*, is perhaps meant that the side of the cloud which was towards them assumed

fumed a fiery appearance, which could not fail to terrify them, and produce the effect that is here described. Their terror producing much confusion, many of their chariots would be overturned, and their wheels broken, through their inattention to the uneven bottom of the sea. Or the divine power might be exerted in some extraordinary way to add to their embarrassment.

26. This was probably in the morning, when the Israelites had all passed over. The waters returned on Moses stretching out his rod, to shew that it was not a natural event, but produced by the immediate power of God. For the mere raising of his rod could not have had any such effect.

The natives call this part of the sea *Bahar Kolzum*, or the sea of destruction; and just opposite to Pihahiroth is a bay, the North cape of which is called *Ras Musa*, or the cape of Moses, even now. There is about fourteen fathom water in the channel, and about nine at the sides, and good anchoring every where. The farthest side is a low sandy coast, and a very easy landing place.

Bruce's Travels, p. 234.

30. This was the 21st of Nisan, the last day of the feast of unleavened bread, and certainly the most memorable in the history of the Israelites, and in all history, for the wonderful display of divine power in it. The impression made by it must have been very great upon the minds of all who were either witness of it, or were made acquainted with it. It must have effectually weakened and overawed the Egyptians. And tho' the Israelites continued forty years after this in an unsettled state,

and never at any great distance from Egypt, no attempt was made to bring them back, or to give them any molestation.

Other nations, too, must have been struck with amazement and terror at these events. For otherwise, such a multitude as the Israelites were, and so encumbered with baggage, would have made them appear an easy prey to the warlike nations in whose neighbourhood they continued so long a time. This circumstance did indeed tempt the Amalekites to attack them, but these being defeated, they afterwards proceeded without molestation. That a great and lasting impression was made on the minds of the Philistines, who were in that neighbourhood, appears from their history in the time of Samuel, when we read (1 Sam. iv. 7) that when the ark of God was carried into the camp of the Israelites *they were afraid, for they said, God is come into the camp. Wo unto us, for there hath not been such a thing heretofore. Wo unto us. Who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty gods. These are the gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness.*

31. This great deliverance, preceded by the wonders they had been witnesses to in Egypt, could not fail to convince the Israelites of the superiority of their God to the gods of the Egyptians, to the worship of which they had conformed. They must also have been convinced that Moses had acted by his direction.

Some little evidence of the truth of this most remarkable event may be derived from the records of the antient Irish nation, who from the earliest times had

had written characters, and spoke the language of the Carthaginians, which is a proof of their Phenician origin. They say that, after leaving their native country they were settled some time on the borders of the Red sea in Egypt, at a place called *Caperhiroth*, that it was at this place that the Israelites went through the sea, and that they had supplied them with provisions. After this they say that they were expelled from *Caperhiroth*, by the grandson of that Pharaoh who was drowned in the Red sea, and after removing from place to place, came at length to settle in Ireland. That this story is no invention of the friends of revelation, is evident from the place where they were settled in Egypt being called *Caperhiroth*, and not *Pihahiroth*, as in Moses; and yet the signification is so nearly the same, that they must be the same place; *Caperhiroth* signifying the town of *Hiroth*, and *Pihahiroth* the mouth, or port of *Hiroth*. See Sir Lawrence Parson's *Defence of the Antient History of Ireland*, subjoined to his *Observations on the Bequest of Henry Flood, Esq.*

Ch. XV. 1. Poetical compositions, in commemoration of great events, have been the earliest productions of every country. They were committed to memory, and sung, accompanied with instruments of music, and especially by women, as we see with respect to this song of Moses, composed on this truly memorable occasion. Of what measures the poetry of the Hebrews consisted, we are ignorant. All that we can discover is, that their poetical compositions consisted of short sentences, expressed in strong figures, and sometimes the differ-

ent sentences began with the letters of their alphabet, in their proper order.

3. *Is mighty in war.* SAM.

13. That is, the country in which the Divine Being would make his peculiar residence, as in the tabernacle and temple.

20. Miriam is the word from which is derived our *Mary*. Its signification is uncertain. Some say it means *exalted*, but others the *myrrh*, or *the bitterness of the sea*. She is here called the sister of Aaron, being perhaps born of the same mother, and different from that of Moses. She gave out the words of the song, and the other women repeated after her. The instrument here mentioned was of the nature of a *drum*, or such as was struck with a plectrum, or some instrument to make it sound.

22. This is the same with the wilderness of Etham, at least a part of it. These three days were the 22nd, 23d, and 24th of Nisan.

23. This, according to Mr. Bruce, was probably *Corandel*, where there is a spring of brackish water, and such is the tradition of the natives. *Travels*, p. 234.

24. There is something very extraordinary in this readiness of the people, thus miraculously conducted, to quarrel with their leader. It shews, however, their extreme backwardness to leave Egypt, and therefore furnishes a strong proof that there must have been something miraculous in their being brought out of it. No persuasion would have been sufficient for the purpose.

25. It cannot be supposed that there was any natural quality in the wood of this tree to sweeten the water. The quantity of wood that would have been necessary for

for such an effect as this, and the time that it must have taken (considering that two millions of people were to be supplied) is a sufficient objection to this supposition.

27. They seem to have continued but one day at Mara, and on the 25th they came to Elim. Shaw found nine of these springs in this place, the rest being choked with sand. The greatest part of them were in a garden belonging to the Greek monks of Tor. They were surrounded with a great number of palm trees (he says more than two thousand) the dates of which bring a considerable sum of money to the monks.

Ch. XVI. 1. It appears from Num. xxxiii, that before they came to this wilderness, they encamped by the Red sea. But probably nothing remarkable being done there, it is not mentioned in this place. It might perhaps have been to gather the spoils of the Egyptians thrown up from the sea. This movement was exactly a month after their leaving Egypt, so that they must have continued some time either at Elim, or near the sea.

3. After this verse Dr. Geddes introduces verses xi & xii.

5. It is evident from this that the division of time into weeks was known at this period. It was known to the antient Egyptians and Hindoos who did not borrow any thing from Moses. But it does not follow from this that the seventh day had been observed as a sabbath.

It is said by some, that the substance here called *manna* is now found in this part of the world. But admitting this, which may well be questioned, the quantity of it that must have been produced at this time, must
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have been miraculous, especially the extraordinary quantity of it that was always found on the sixth day of the week, and its then keeping two days, whereas at other times whatever remained above the consumption of one day became putrid, and unfit for use. This great and permanent miracle might, one would think, have prevented all dissatisfaction and complaint; and no doubt it did so with all who were capable of serious reflection. But when any appearance becomes constant and regular, it passes without much attention by the generality of mankind. Otherwise there would be no atheists in the world.

7. This promise of a visible appearance of some symbol of the divine presence, which no doubt, was the same luminous cloud which had conducted them through the Red sea, was calculated to give them the fullest assurance of their continuing to be under the divine guidance.

10. It is probable that this appearance had been discontinued after their passage through the Red sea, but now re-appeared, and accompanied them all the time they were in the wilderness.

13. These birds come in great flocks from the Arabian gulph, across the desert; and being sometimes much fatigued with a long flight, are easily caught. This was about the middle of April, which is the time when quails generally cross the Red sea; and to this day incredible numbers are often caught about this time of the year. *Un. Hist.*

15. *They said to one another, What is it, for they knew not what it was.*

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The word *manna* signifies *what is it*, the language they used when they first observed it, and had no name for it. But as this was that part of the country in which Moses had resided forty years, and was not very distant from the land of Goshen, it could not have been a common thing, if it was known at all. It is, therefore, much to be doubted whether it ever was a natural production. The specimen of it that was kept in the ark, to shew to their posterity what it was on which their ancestors fed in the wilderness, makes it still more probable that afterwards it was no where to be found.

25. Mede supposes that this was the seventh day from the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red sea, and therefore that this was an additional reason for the Israelites observing this day, and as such it is mentioned in the account of the ten commandments in Deut. v, 15. It is, therefore, supposed that the rest of the sabbath was not observed before, but only directed to be so from this time, as a guard against idolatry, to which from their residence in Egypt, the Israelites became peculiarly prone. It is not necessary to suppose that the first sabbath that was observed was the seventh day from the creation, since a seventh day from any other period, as that of the destruction of the Egyptians, would answer the purpose as well.

As the heathens had been used to consecrate particular days to particular deities, it might please the Divine Being to direct that one of the seven days into which the heathens then divided time (guided by a respect to the seven planets) should be dedicated to *him*,
and

and that on this day his peculiar people should refrain from any work of their own, to remind them of the devotion they owed to *him*, in preference to the gods of the heathens. This is the more probable from the precepts concerning the prohibition of idolatry being sometimes immediately subjoined to those concerning the observance of the sabbath, as Lev. xix, 3, 4 *Keep my sabbath. I am the Lord your God. Turn ye not unto idols, nor make to yourselves molten gods, I am the Lord your God.* Also the complaint of the violation of the sabbath in after times is sometimes subjoined to that concerning an addictedness to idolatry. Ezek. xx, 16. *They polluted my sabbaths, for their hearts went after their idols.*

31. Had this manna been a natural, and especially a common, production, it would hardly have been so particularly described as it is in this place, and also in Num. xi. 28. There the taste of it is said to have resembled that of *fresh oil*, which does not contradict this account. It must have been a hard substance, very different from that which goes by that name with us ; for it required to be bruised in a mortar, and was not eaten without baking, or some other preparation by fire.

32. This order was probably given afterwards, when the ark and the tabernacle were constructed.

35. Moses lived till the expiration of this term, when the Israelites were in possession of all the country to the East of Jordan, which had been possessed by the Amorites, and was sufficient to maintain them without this miracle of the manna.

36. The *Epha* is supposed to have contained thirty two pints. The *homer* was, therefore, something more than

than three. GEDDES. But according to bishop Cumberland the homer was nearly three quarts. Whatever this quantity was when unprepared, it was afterwards sufficient for the sustenance of one person per day.

Ch. XVII. 1 All the stations are not mentioned in this place. For in the book of Numbers, in which they are distinctly enumerated, *Dophkah* and *Alash* are mentioned between the wilderness of Sin and Rephidim, as well as that by the Red sea.

2. Looking to Moses for every thing they were impatient of any difficulty, which would not have been the case if the scheme of the escape from Egypt had been a measure of the heads of the nation. They would not then have depended upon any single person, but would have had substitutes provided against all emergencies. It is, indeed, evident from many other circumstances, as well as this, that the measure was not their own. No provision was made for any thing that might happen. But leaving the country with reluctance, they were naturally disposed to complain of every inconvenience, as what they had been brought into by others, and not by themselves.

6. This luminous cloud, the symbol of the divine presence, would appear upon the rock, and Horeb was probably a part of the same mountain with Sinai. This supply of water on Moses only striking the rock, where no water had been before, nor has been since, was a most wonderful display of divine power. The water must have been in great abundance to supply two millions of persons, which excludes all possibility of artifice and imposition in the case. The miracle must also have
been

been of some continuance ; no doubt, as long as they continued in that neighbourhood, which was at least a year. There are sufficient traces of this extraordinary miracle existing at this day ; the part of the rock from which the water flowed remaining as it was, only detached from the mountain, and lying on the plain before it. Drawings have been taken of it by Shaw, Pococke, and I believe other travellers, which shew such holes and channels in the stone, as could only have been made by the bursting out, and running of water. No art of man could have done it, if any motive could be supposed for the undertaking in such a place as this.

8. These Amalekites, as was observed before, could not be descended from the son of Esau of that name, but most probably from Canaan. They seem to have attacked the Israelites without any provocation, merely for the sake of plunder ; expecting to find them unprepared for any resistance, and probably before they had been informed of all the circumstances of their passage through the Red sea, and the plagues of Egypt.

9. It is evident from this, that Moses was no warrior ; and it sufficiently appeared before that he was no orator ; so that he was destitute of all the talents that would naturally qualify him to take the lead in such an undertaking, as the rescuing of his countrymen from the yoke of the Egyptians, and procuring them a settlement in another country ; especially as that country was at that time in the possession of a very warlike people. In this, therefore, we see not the hand of man, but that of God.

11. From this it was evident that the success of the Israelites was from God, tho' this might not appear to the combatants, and its appearing to depend upon the prayers of Moses, would be an encouragement to piety.

14. This threatening was accomplished by Saul.

15. *Jehovah nissi* signifies *the Lord is my standard*.

16. This may be rendered, as in the margin of our common translation, *Because the hand of the Amalekites is against the throne of God, therefore I will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.*

Ch. XVIII. 1. The country of Jethro was very near the place where the Israelites were now encamped. For it was while Moses was with him that, at this very place, he saw the appearance of fire in the bush. It was natural for his father in law to take this opportunity of visiting him, and bringing his wife and his children to him, especially after the late wonderful transactions, in which he had borne so conspicuous a part.

6. *And it was told Moses, behold thy father in law.*
 &c. SAM. LXX. SYA.

12. Jethro being a priest, offered these sacrifices, and Moses and Aaron, with the elders of Israel, partook of the feast which always accompanied the sacrifice. For, tho' one of these sacrifices was a burnt offering, the whole of which was consumed, there were others called peace offerings that accompanied them, of which the offerers and their friends partook.

23. This seasonable advice which Jethro gave to Moses was with a reference to the approbation of God, to whom the measure was to be referred.

24. Tho' the advice was given at this time, it is probable that it was not carried into execution till some-time afterwards.

27. It is probable that the worship of the true God continued long in the family of Jethro, and the tribe to which he belonged. Those Kenites from whom came the Rechabites were of it 1 Chron. ii, 55.

Ch. XIX. 1. This is probably to be understood of the first day of the third month, called Sivan, after their coming out of Egypt, or forty five days after their departure. And reckoning the days which intervened between this time, and the giving of the law from mount Sinai, the whole time between that event, and the institution of the passover will be just *fifty days*; and the same number of days always intervened between the passover and the feast of Pentecost. This latter is, therefore, considered as a commemoration of the giving of the law, tho' this is no where said to have been the design of it.

4. The bird here referred to is not properly the *eagle*, as Mr. Bruce has shewn, but another bird called the *Rahama*, which is noted for its care of its young, and its carrying them on its back.

6. This is the first intimation that was given to all the people, of their being to stand in a peculiar relation to God, and it is formally proposed to them to accept it or not.

8. The proposal being made to them, they joyfully accepted it; Moses, who brought to them the message from God, reporting their answer.

9 After

9. After this solemn transaction, God apprizes Moses of his intention to speak to all the people in such a manner as should give them the fullest satisfaction with respect to his peculiar preference with them, and the divine authority of the laws that he was to be the medium of conveying to them. And this measure answered the purpose in the completest manner. For, notwithstanding the frequent defection of the Israelites from the rites of their religion, and their conformity to those of the neighbouring nations, they do not appear ever to have disbelieved the divine mission of Moses, or the reality of the extraordinary appearances that are here recited, any more than that of the miracles which effected their deliverance from the bondage in Egypt. And to this day all the Jews retain the firmest belief in them.

10. An extraordinary appearance of God being intended, it was proper that the minds of all the people should be duly prepared for it; that after such a state of expectation, it might make the deeper impression. The announcing of such an appearance so long before it took place, would also afford the incredulous, if there were any such among them, an opportunity of discovering any imposition with respect to it.

11. This third day means the third after the order for preparing themselves for it.

12. *Thou shalt set bounds unto the mountain.* SAM.

13. *When the trumpet is silent, or has ceased,* SAM.
& LXX.

After this signal they were to approach nearer, but still to keep within the distance before prescribed to them.

15. Other nations, as well as the Hebrews, annexed the idea of impurity to conjugal embraces, so as to abstain from them previous to any solemn act of religion. *Spencer*, p. 190. Even the Egyptian priests, notwithstanding the indecencies practised in their very temples, and the precincts of them, abstained from all intercourse with their wives previous to their ministrations. *Ibid*, p. 798.

18. A more awful appearance, and better calculated to excite the most serious attention, cannot be imagined than that which is here described.

20. Moses was called, as it should seem, by a voice heard by all the people, to approach nearer, probably within the appearance of fire and smoke in which the mountain was involved; and after this Aaron was in like manner called to follow him.

22. They who are here called *priests*, were probably the heads of the several tribes, who, as appears, had the privilege of sacrificing before the institution of the priesthood in the family of Aaron.

25. After being in the place of the divine presence, Moses took his station lower down in the mount; standing as he said, Deut. v, 45, *between God and the people*.

Ch XX. After the solemn preparation described in the preceding chapter, an articulate voice proceeded from the mount, so as to be distinctly heard by all the people, not less at that time than two millions, pronouncing the ten commandments, and the following introduction to them. This was as extraordinary a miracle as can be imagined. For by no natural means whatever could such an effect have been produced. This is

complete

computed to have been on the sixth day of the third month, or Sivan.

1. As the great object of the laws that were to be promulgated, was to establish a peculiar relation between God and this nation, the Divine Being begins with the mention of the peculiar obligation that they were under to him, for delivering them from their bondage in Egypt. And as this wonderful deliverance had evinced his superiority to all the gods of Egypt, he in the first place claims their undivided homage and worship.

4. No mention is here made of images in the human form, from which it is with great probability inferred, that at this time all the objects of idolatrous worship were the heavenly bodies, and other parts of nature, and not dead men; and that no images were then in the form of men, but of various animals, thought probably to represent the attributes of their gods. For such were the idols of the Egyptians. They even worshiped the living animals themselves, supposing them to be animated by divinities.

6. This declaration was calculated to shew that the mercy and goodness of God is of far greater extent than his anger. His resentment of the misconduct of any person will never go farther than the third or fourth generation, whereas his favour would be shewn without any limits to the posterity of his faithful worshippers. This is abundantly exemplified in the history of the posterity of Abraham, who were destined, on account of his piety and virtue, to be the most illustrious nation upon earth, at the distance of several thousand ages from

the time of Abraham. And to this there was probably an allusion at this time.

7. The object of this command is to inculcate the sacredness of an oath, or a solemn appeal to God for the truth of any declaration. And perjury has ever been considered as the most heinous of crimes, an act of impiety deserving the divine vengeance, which men by this mode imprecate upon themselves. The Jews interpret this of ascribing the attributes and actions of the true God to idols, as Aaron did when he called the golden calf the god that brought them out of the land of Egypt. *Un. Hist.*

11. The obligation to keep a weekly sabbath is here grounded on the work of creation being finished in six days, and God's resting on the seventh, a reason which equally affects all mankind. But in the repetition of this in the book of Deuteronomy, another reason is given, which respects the Israelites only; and as this law of the sabbath was never promulgated to mankind at large, and is not included in those Jewish observances which the apostles recommended to the Gentile christians, it does not seem to be obligatory on any besides the Jews; and to them perhaps only while residing in their own country. To persons living in Palestine, and whose occupation was husbandry, it was no great inconvenience to abstain from labour one day in seven. For the seasons being regular, no injury would be sustained by it in the time of harvest, whereas the case is very different in countries in which the weather is uncertain and variable; so that the same rule of conduct will not apply to them.

12. By the term *honour*, is to be understood allowing a maintenance, to which parents are naturally intitled from their children, when they are old and unable to maintain themselves. Thus when the apostle says that an elder is *worthy of double honour*, he means a double stipend, and the honour he advises to be given to widows is to be understood in the same sense.

17. In these ten commandments, certain crimes are simply, but expressly, forbidden by divine authority. Particular penalties to be inflicted for the breach of them by the civil magistrates, will be found in another place. In the close of them is delivered an excellent moral precept, the observance of which will prevent all crimes, viz. the prohibition of the inordinate desire of any thing that is the property of another person.

18. *And the people heard the thunderings, and the sound of the trumpet, and saw the lightnings, &c.* SAM.

This was probably during the thunder and the sound of the trumpet, before the delivery of the ten commandments; so that instead of approaching too near they were so terrified that they stood at a considerable distance, which makes their distinctly hearing the articulate words the more extraordinary. Possibly, however, there might have been thunder and the sound of a trumpet between the delivery of each of the ten commandments, so that their terror increasing, they intreated Moses that this awful scene might proceed no farther; since it would satisfy them if God spake to *him* only, and he to them; being abundantly convinced with respect to the presence of God with them, and of his being the faithful messenger of God to them.

19. There was always an apprehension among men that it was dangerous for them to see any superior being. For considering themselves as sinners, and therefore liable to punishment, they supposed he was come for that purpose.

20. Moses, therefore, encouraged them, by assuring them that God had not come to punish them, but, on the contrary, to testify his peculiar favour and friendship for them. This was to prevent their sinning, and consequently their punishment.

24. This may relate to the altars that might be erected before the construction of the temple, or afterwards, on particular occasions. It is then added that, in all places which would be fixed on by himself for the purposes of the national worship, he would signify his particular presence with them, and his acceptance of their offerings. But this would not authorize them to expect any favour for acts of worship of their own devising.

The object of this law seems to have been to prevent the Israelites from building such lofty altars as were common with the heathens, who laid much stress on approaching as near as they could to the heavens in the worship of the celestial gods. That steps to altars were not absolutely unlawful is evident from the directions to make them to the altar described by Ezekiel. There must also be a reference to very large steps such as those with which some of the pyramids of Egypt were constructed. Otherwise there could not have been any danger of exposing their nakedness in ascending them.

The

The altar of burnt offering in the tabernacle with its base was only five cubits high, and that in Solomon's temple ten.

25. This probably related to altars erected by prophets and others on extraordinary occasions, and not to the national altar, which we do not find to have been constructed in this manner, either in the tabernacle or the temple. The reason why these altars were not made of more durable materials might be to prevent them from being abused for the purpose of superstition.

Martine the Benedictine shews that the idea of pollution was annexed to that of iron, as being employed in war to shed human blood. On this account no razor was to touch the head of a Nazarite. The same idea prevailed in the heathen world. Plato forbade the use of copper or iron in temples. It was thought that even the ghosts of the dead had an antipathy to iron.

Neither the tabernacle nor the temple could have been erected without tools made of iron. The altar, however, being considered as the table of God, was on that account more peculiarly sacred, and therefore to be constructed without the use of any thing that could in the most distant manner convey the idea of impurity.

26. As the garments of the East are loose, the walking carelessly up an eminence might expose the wearer of them to indecency, particularly if the steps by which they ascended were high. But another and effectual method to prevent this indecency was provided in the dress of the priests; for they wore drawers during their service in the temple. The great altar in the temple of

Solomon was ten cubits, or five yards, high ; but the ascent to it was thought not to have been by steps, but a gradual acclivity. In the temple described by Ezekiel mention is made of steps ; but this relates to a future state of things. In the worship of the heathens, little regard was paid to decency, especially, as it is said, in that of Baal Peor.

Ch. XXI. Here Moses begins to recite those particular laws which were communicated to him on the mount, and which were not delivered by God himself in the hearing of all the people, in consequence of their having declared that this method would be more satisfactory to them.

2. It was excellently provided for in the Hebrew laws, that no inconvenience any man might bring himself into could long affect himself or his posterity. He might reduce himself to a state of servitude, but it could only be for seven years ; and his inheritance in land could only be mortgaged till the year of Jubilee, which returned every half century.

4. If he gave him a wife who was a slave, and could only be of Gentile extraction, both the mother and the children were slaves. Such a marriage must, however, have been voluntary on the part of the husband ; so that he knew the conditions to which he subjected himself.

6. This custom of boring the ears, to signify a perpetual attachment to the house, was in use in Syria and Arabia, as Bochart shews from Juvenal and Petronius. The phrase *serve him forever* is supposed to mean till the year of Jubilee, or till the death of his master.

8. By this it appears that she was transferred into another family with a view to be married into it ; and as a dowry was always given for a wife, the debt of the father was cancelled by this means.

In the printed text it is *who is not betrothed to him*, which Houbigant prefers to the reading of the Masorites, and which has been adopted by our translators.

13. In antient times the power of revenging a murder, was more or less in the hands of the person who was the principal sufferer by it, who of course was the nearest relation of the deceased ; and it was only gradually that in any country this power was taken out of his hands, and placed in those of the civil magistrate. Here we find a very happy medium. In case of accidental death, the person who was the occasion of it was obliged to fly, that he might not come in the way of those he had injured, and an asylum was provided for him during a certain time. This inconvenience would serve as a motive for great care with respect to life. But if the murder had been willful, there was no place of refuge for the murderer. The altar itself was no security in that case ; whereas with the heathens altars were places of absolute safety to the greatest criminals, so absurd and mischievous was their superstition.

15. According to the LXX the seventeenth verse follows this, and thus the order will become more natural.

20. In the Samaritan copy the words *with a rod* are omitted.

27. There was both justice and mercy in this law, exceeding what we find in other nations, where slaves were

were wholly in the power of their masters, who might maim, and even kill them, without any punishment. The treatment of slaves by the Romans was most shocking.

Ch. XXII. 2. If the breaking into the house was in the night, he might be killed, but not if it was in the day time. And in all countries the crime called *burglary*, or breaking into a house by night, is deemed peculiarly heinous. In the usual hours of sleep persons cannot be sufficiently on their guard.

18. Witchcraft, or pretending to a power of engaging the aid of invisible beings, belonged to the system of idolatry; and nothing of this kind could be admitted among a people set apart from all others for the sole purpose of preserving in the world the knowledge and worship of the one true God, in opposition to all false gods.

19. Men who can so far debase their natures, as to have commerce with brute beasts, are not fit to live in human society.

20. This was in its own nature the greatest crime that a Hebrew could be guilty of. It was treason against their lawful sovereign; and the great object of all their laws was to keep them free from idolatry.

24. This was a threatening of some visible judgment of God, in the course of his providence.

25. As the Israelites were not to be a commercial people, they were required to shew their friendship to each other, by lending their money without usury. With respect to strangers, this was not forbidden.

26 There

26. There is much humanity in these laws, as well as in many others.

29. By the offering of their first fruits they were reminded of what they owed to God for all that they enjoyed. The first born God claimed in order to remind them of his having spared their first born when he destroyed those of the Egyptians. These, however, were not to be sacrificed, but to be redeemed with animals proper for sacrifice.

At the passover were presented the first fruits of the barley harvest, at the pentecost those of the wheat. The first fruits offered at the passover called בכורים and by the LXX *αρωγανθηματα* were not come to their maturity. Those presented at the other festivals called תרומה in the LXX *αρωγαν* were fruits fit for use, and given to the priests. *Spencer*, p. 714.

31. Being a nation properly set apart for the worship of the one true God, and placed under his immediate government, they were to keep themselves from everything that was supposed to defile them, and render them unfit for communion with a Being of perfect purity. To eat animals from which the blood had not been drained, was to eat the blood.

Ch. XXIII. 3. An exceedingly small alteration in a Hebrew letter, and also in the Samaritan character, will make this to read: *Thou shalt not countenance a great man in his cause*; and certainly there was very little occasion for any caution against favouring a poor man.

4. These are excellent precepts. For they can hardly be called laws, as there is no penalty annexed to the breach of them.

9. In the laws of all nations a great distinction was made between citizens and strangers. Here a particular respect for strangers is inculcated.

11. The Divine Being, in order to preserve on the minds of the Israelites the idea of their lands being his gift, and that he retained the property, tho' he allowed them the use of them, appointed a seventh year of rest, in which whatever grew naturally should be at his disposal; and he gave it to the poor, the strangers, and the wild animals, for whose sustenance he hereby shewed that he was concerned. In return for their observance of this law, they were promised a more abundant increase the sixth year.

14. We shall have a more particular account of these three great festivals, the Passover, the Pentecost, and the feast of Tabernacles, hereafter.

15. It is an invariable custom in the East not to approach any great man without some present, by way of shewing homage or respect.

17. All persons capable of travelling were required to attend at the place of national worship. Many women also attended, tho' they were under no obligation to do it.

19. This was probably a prohibition of some superstitious rite of heathenism. It is said that the heathens sprinkled their fields and gardens with such broth as this, with a view to make them more fruitful. Abarbanel, in confirmation of this says, that it was then the custom in Spain for the shepherds to celebrate a rustic festival twice a year with kids and milk; but that they
boiled

boiled the kid in the milk he does not say. : *Spencer*, p. 331.

This precept is given twice in connection with the account of the feast of tabernacles, and therefore probably refers to the custom of the Zabians, who performed this rite in the autumn, when they generally gathered the fruits of the ground. *Ib.* p. 337. Milk and kids, separately or jointly, were both much used in the heathen ceremonies. To the god Silvanus milk was offered by the Romans, and kids were offered to Bacchus. *Ib.* p. 338.

20. As on all former occasions angels were nothing more than symbols of the divine presence, it is most natural to understand the term in the same sense in this place; tho' this angel is spoken of by the Divine Being as a third person as distinct from himself. That they were, at least, in effect, the same, appears from v. xxii, where it is said *Thou shalt, indeed, obey his voice, and do all that I speak.*

23. It does not appear that the Israelites had any other conductor in taking possession of the land of Canaan, than the same that conducted them through the wilderness. Sometimes, however, angels are represented as persons different from the Supreme Being. Thus when three persons appeared to Abraham, one of whom certainly represented the Supreme Being, two of them must have had subordinate characters; and these went to Sodom, and were entertained by Lot, while the Principal remained and communed with Abraham.

28. Tho' no mention is made of these insects in the history of the wars of Joshua, they may have acted the
part

part that is here assigned to them, and have assisted in the molestation and expulsion of the Canaanites. But Dr. Geddes conjectures that the meaning may be that God would send *consternation or dejection of mind*, agreeably he thinks, to the original signification of the word in the Hebrew.

31. This space was never completely occupied by the Israelites, especially towards the Euphrates, except for a short time in the reigns of David and Solomon, if a tract of land almost without inhabitants can be said to be occupied. But no doubt this will be the case after their restoration, when, through the improvements in agriculture, the deserts shall be cultivated and become habitable.

Ch. XXIV. After giving the most important of all the laws that were prescribed to the Israelites, they were required to signify their acceptance of them; and a solemn engagement or covenant was to be made upon the occasion, of which the following is an account. So large a number as seventy were appointed to accompany Moses, probably that they might be witnesses of there being no imposition in the case, but that the laws they received were unquestionably from God, and that the report of Moses concerning them might be absolutely depended upon.

5. There was not as yet any order of priests appointed, and therefore Moses employed what young men he thought proper to assist in sacrificing.

8. His sprinkling one part on the altar respected God, as it were to bind *him*, and the other on the people,

ple, or such of them as stood in the foremost ranks, who might represent all the nation, to bind *them* to the observance of their part of the agreement.

10. The Chaldee paraphrase says, *They saw the glory of the God of Israel*, or some symbol of his presence, sufficient to convince them that they were transacting with the Divine Being himself, and that there was no imposition in the case. What it was that they really saw is not said. Mention is made of its *feet*, but that may signify nothing more than the lower part of it, whatever it was, even if it was nothing more than the bright cloud which they and all the people had seen before. This, however, must, no doubt, have been something that was visible, and that they had not seen before. As some paved work is said to have been under its feet, there must have been the appearance of something that required a solid support, perhaps such an appearance as Ezekiel saw at the river Chebar.

Dr. Geddes, who uniformly denies that there was any thing supernatural in any part of this history, supposes that these seventy persons, who, he says, "were called up by Moses to see with their own eyes a sensible mark of the divine presence," saw nothing but the clear sky above the clouds with which the mountain was covered. But if this had been all that they saw, they must have returned with the conviction that Moses was an impostor.

11. Here, in the presence of this extraordinary appearance, they probably partook of the sacrifices that had been offered, and without receiving any injury,

such as they had apprehended from so near an approach to God.

12. This was probably in the hearing of all the seventy elders, so that they were witnesses that Moses went by divine appointment, and therefore that what he should report, as coming from God, might be depended upon.

13. Joshua accompanied Moses till he entered into the cloud, and there waited till his return; for there Moses found him at his descent forty days afterwards.

14. Aaron and Hur, the prince of the tribe of Judah, appear to have had the greatest authority next to Moses; and they supported his arms when he prayed during the battle with the Amalekites.

16. This whole week Moses seems to have been kept waiting, which would prepare his mind for the solemn and intimate communication he afterwards had with God, and which continued forty days, tho' this week was perhaps included in them. For he was then upon the mount, removed from the view of the people. This second ascent of Moses is computed to have been on the 14th of the sixth month or Sivan.

17. What had at first appeared like a dark cloud, now became luminous like fire.

Ch. XXV. 1. God, having signified his intention of residing with the Israelites, as their God and governor, proceeds to give directions concerning the place of his residence, and the manner in which he chose that he should be attended. For this purpose, that he might accommodate himself to the usages of men, a house of habitation was to be provided, a table to be furnished, and

and servants to attend upon him, and be the medium of his intercourse with the people. Accordingly we find that a magnificent tabernacle, or tent, was to be erected, the most retired part of which was to be appropriated to his more immediate residence, and the outer part for the priests; while the open court was for the people, in their approaches to him. Each of these places was to be furnished with utensils proper for them, and for the business to be done in them.

2. This offering was not exacted of any person. It was only said what articles would be wanted, and they were given voluntarily.

4. These colours are thought to be well translated in our common version. The word תכלית by blue, or sky colour; מרגלית purple, a colour most esteemed in ancient times, and שני scarlet, or a bright red. See the notes on Genesis, xxxviii, 28. Linen was a manufacture in which the Egyptians excelled, but the word שש is now generally thought to signify cotton, which came from the East, where it was always manufactured in great perfection. This being brought from a distance, was more valued than linen. The goats hair is thought to have been that fine down of which shawls are made, than which nothing is more admired to this day. The word translated *badgers skins*, whatever it was, appears to have been thought of great value; since in the fine parable of Ezekiel, in which the Israelitish nation is represented as a woman treated in the most costly and delicate manner (Ch. xvi. 10) she is said to have been shod with badgers skins. Perhaps

the colour, and not the skin itself, was intended by the word.

Bochart has endeavoured to prove that it signifies a kind of violet, or purple colour. Some suppose that it might be the skin of a kind of seal that is pretty common in the Red sea. Dr. Geddes approves of this.

The Shittim wood is supposed, with great probability, to be the *Acacia mimosa Nilotica*, a species of thorn which grows in great abundance in the deserts of Arabia, and the wood of which, according to St. Jerom, is extremely light, solid, strong, smooth, and beautiful, qualities rarely found together in any wood. GEDDES.

6. As the house of God was to be furnished with every thing necessary, oil for light could not be omitted, and the tabernacle had no windows to admit any light. There was also perfumed oils for the purpose of consecrations, and incense for a pleasant smell, an article never omitted at an entertainment in the East.

The Egyptian priests burned incense three times every day to the sun, resin at sun-rise, myrrh at noon, and kuphi, which was a compound of sixteen articles, at sun set. *Marsham*, p. 203.

7. Besides the valuable things that the Israelites brought out of Egypt, consisting of all the wealth that Jacob and his family had carried into it, that Joseph had acquired there, and that had been given them at their departure, they, no doubt, trafficked with the caravans that traversed the wilderness; and by this means could procure both spices and cotton, with which Egypt was supplied by the same means.

8. The tabernacle was considered as the house of God, the place of his residence, where he was to be attended as a prince, the lawgiver and supreme civil governor of the people, all their magistrates being considered as his officers.

9. It appears from this that Moses had not only received verbal instructions concerning the tabernacle, and all its furniture; but had had a pattern of every thing shewn to him, that it might make the deeper impression on his mind, and prevent any mistake. For nothing was left to his discretion, much less was he at liberty to copy any thing that he had seen belonging to the heathen worship of the Egyptians.

10. This ark may be considered as a cabinet, containing things of particular value, and kept in the most secret and the safest part of a house, to which no person besides the master had access. Bishop Cumberland thinks that the scripture cubit was the Egyptian cubit of twenty one inches. If so, the table described afterwards would be about thirty two inches high, which is a proper height for a table; whereas if the cubit was only eighteen inches, it would only be twenty seven inches high, which he thought would be too low for the purpose.

The heathens had sacred chests, but they contained things unknown to the vulgar, called *mysteries*. One of them Clemens Alexandrinus says contained the private parts of Dionysus, probably the phallus. Plutarch speaks of serpents creeping out of one of these sacred chests. *Spencer*, p. 831.

The Hebrew ark was carried only by priests, but those of the heathens were sometimes carried in procession by women.

The heathen temples in general faced the West, but the more antient of them faced the East, that they might receive the rays of the rising sun. Such was the temple of the Syrian goddess described by Lucian. *Spencer*, p. 913, 917.

11. It was not gilded, but covered with thin plates of gold; but being of wood, it would be sufficiently light to be carried.

12. The word here rendered *corner*, signifies the foot or basis of any thing; and therefore it is supposed that these rings were fixed to the lower corner of the ark; and by this means, when it was carried on men's shoulders, it would be more conspicuous.

15. As the staves by which the ark was to be carried were never to be removed from it, it is probable they were so fixed as not easily to be moved from their places. By this means it might be carried without danger of any accident, which was perhaps the inconvenience to be guarded against by this provision.

16. These were the two tables of stone written with the finger of God, and these were all that was in the ark when the temple of Solomon was built, as we find 2 Kings, viii, 9. But besides these there might have been Aaron's rod that budded, and the pot of manna, which were either to be kept in it, or placed near it.

17. The word rendered *Mercy seat*, signifies the cover of a thing; but sins being said to be covered when they are forgiven, and the Divine Being appearing propitious

pitious, or merciful, from this place, it has, in the LXX and other antient versions obtained the name of *propitiatory, or mercy seat*.

18. The animals of the forms of which these emblematical figures consisted were the most distinguished of the several kinds; the lion among the wild beasts, the bull among the tame ones, the eagle among birds, and man at the head of all; so that they might naturally represent all nature.

We do not find among the Egyptians any emblematical figures resembling the cherubims. They also differed essentially from heathen images, as they were no objects of worship, nor were ever produced in public for the veneration of the people.

18. As there were two of these cherubims or emblematical figures to be made, and the figures of several others were portrayed in other parts of the tabernacle, they could not be intended to represent the Divine Being, who is always said to be but one. The word commonly rendered *beaten work*, may signify that it was not to be made of different pieces, but of the same with the cover, so as not to be moveable upon it.

22. This was the place of the Divine residence, where he was to be applied to on extraordinary occasions.

23. A table is a necessary article in the furniture of a house, and therefore one was provided here, and bread was to be always placed upon it. It was of the same height with the ark, but not so long or so broad.

28. These staves were not to remain in their places, for then they would have been in the way of the priests,

who daily ministered near them, which was not the case with respect to the ark.

29. What was the form, or the use, of the things here rendered *dishes*, or *platters*, does not appear ; but it seems that the bread was placed upon them, and not immediately on the table. Indeed, decency required that something should be used for the purpose. Spoons, covers, and bowls, were useful in every house ; and this table seems to have been the place where they were kept, tho' they might not have any certain use respecting it. The covers, however, might have been put upon the loaves of bread, as the dishes were under them. The bowls might be used in libations, tho' none were made at this table.

Dr. Geddes renders the passage, *Thou shalt also make its platters and its incense pots, and its cups, and its cans, &c.* The first, he observes, must have been of a large size ; since those presented by the chiefs of the tribes (Num. vii, 13, &c) weighed one hundred and thirty shekels. The *cups* were vessels smaller than the *cans*.

30. The bread was changed every sabbath day. There were twelve loaves, one for each tribe. Lev. xxiv, 5, &c. Besides the things mentioned here, the table was to be covered with cloth of blue. Num. iv, 7.

32. The word translated *branches* signifies the *calamus*, perhaps because they resembled the stalk of that plant.

40. This golden candlestick consisted of a shaft, or pillar, and six arms, or branches ; at the extremity of each

each of which, and also of the shaft, was a lamp, so that there were seven in all. The form and the ornaments of it may be seen in Reland's account of the figure of it on the pillar of Titus, who took it out of the temple, and had it carried in triumph at Rome. Nothing is said of the length of the shaft or of the pedestal. It is supposed, however, to have been twice as high as the table on which it stood. The talent was three thousand shekels, each two hundred and nineteen grains, and in gold it was of the value of five thousand and seventy five pounds, fifteen shillings and seven pence English money.

Ch. XXVI. Having given an account of every thing that was contained in the tabernacle, Moses proceeds to describe the tabernacle itself, which was moveable, and therefore consisted of such parts as might be separated and put together again, for its more easy conveyance from place to place. He begins with an account of the innermost part of it, which contained the ark. This was to be covered with ten pieces of tapestry, with figures of cherubims upon them. Two kinds of curious manufacture are here mentioned; one called חֹשֶׁב in which it is thought that the same figures appeared on both sides, and the other קֶרֶן in which they appeared on one side only. The former was said to have been made in a loom, whereas the other was worked with a needle.

2. Each of these pieces was fourteen yards long, and two broad; so that they hung within one cubit of the ground, covering both the top and the sides of the inclosed space.

3. The whole space was a circle of ten cubits, or five yards ; the length, breadth, and height, being equal.

14. There were three coverings, which were necessary to defend it from rain, and the roof was flat.

15. To support these coverings, the tabernacle consisted of boards.

26. Besides the links of gold, which held the different boards together, there were also wooden bars, which were received in staples of gold fastened to each of the boards.

29. If this overlaying consisted of plates of gold, like those of the ark, the whole must have been of immense value, and also very heavy. Some are, therefore, of opinion that these boards were only gilded. But gilding consists of thin leaves of gold, and of what degree of thinness they could at this time be made, we cannot tell.

33. The most holy place, which was a cube of five yards, was separated from the holy place, which was of the same height and breadth, but of twice the length, by a vail.

35. After this verse the Samaritan copies have the ten first verses of Ch. xxx, and this is the most natural order.

37. These pillars divided the front of the tabernacle into four spaces, each of two cubits ; and at these the priests entered.

Ch. XXVII. 1. This altar was two yards and an half square, and a yard and an half from the ground ; so that the

the priests, standing on the ground, might be able to manage the fire, in attending the sacrifice:

2. Here is an account of all the instruments that were necessary for sacrificing, and the uses of them are sufficiently obvious, except that of *fire pans*, which seem to have been used for carrying hot coals from place to place, or preserving the fire when the altar was occasionally cleansed.

5. If this grate hung half way from the top to the bottom of the altar, it would always hold a great quantity of hot coals ; but perhaps it was only placed in the midst of the altar, on a level with the upper part of it.

18. From this it appears that the tabernacle stood in an open inclosure, an hundred cubits long, fifty wide, and five cubits high ; so that the tabernacle, being twice that height, might be seen from without. It stood at the upper end of the inclosure, the altar was placed to the front of it, and the laver on one side of the altar. As mention is sometimes made of more courts than one, there might have been a space left for the people who brought sacrifices, so as not to interrupt the priests in the performance of their duty. This, however, might be made when the tabernacle was fixed at Shiloh, and other places. There were these two courts in the temple of Solomon, and Herod added another for women.

20. This oil was only expressed with a pestle and mortar, and therefore more pure than that in the extraction of which the force of some engine had been applied. These lamps were kept burning day and night,
and

and without this the priests would have been in the dark. Josephus says that only three of the lamps were kept burning in the day time, and that the rest were lighted in the evening.

Ch. XXVIII. 1. It is a strong presumption that what Moses directed was by divine appointment, and not from his own suggestion; that passing by his own family, which remained in the condition of ordinary Levites, the priesthood, which was the only dignity in the nation, was confined to that of his brother Aaron. The priests, however, had no power of a temporal nature; nor does it appear from history that they ever arrived at any till the time of the Maccabees.

2. That the priests might appear more respectable while they officiated, a particular and a very decent dress was appointed for them. But this was not left to their own fancy, but, together with every thing else belonging to the national worship, was prescribed by the Divine Being himself. Four articles of dress were appointed for the priests in ordinary, and four more for the high priest. Those for the priests in general were a coat, drawers, a girdle, and a bonnet; and besides these, the Highpriest had a robe, an ephod, a breast plate, and a plate of gold on his forehead.

7. The ephod was a garment which covered the breast and belly, and also the back, as far as the thighs, but not the sides; the two other parts being joined by pieces that lay on the shoulders.

8. This girdle was fastened to the fore part of the ephod, and going round the body fastened the whole together; and did not make a separate garment.

11. Alphabetical writing, Mr. Bruce says had been long used by the Ishmaelites, Cushites, and the trading nations of India, for signing their invoices, engagements &c. and that this was the meaning of the phrase *like the writing of a signet*. *Thoth*, an Egyptian, is generally said to have been the inventor of letters. But Mr. Bruce says that the word *tot* is Ethiopic, and there can be little doubt that it means the *dogstar*. The meaning of the name in the language of Sire is an idol composed of heterogeneous pieces, as that of a man with the head of a dog, &c. *Travels*, p. 416. The first alphabetical writing he says, was the *Geez*, the second the *Saitic*, both derived from hieroglyphics. *Ib.* p. 411.

12. The Highpriest, representing all the people of Israel, bore the names of all the tribes engraved both on two onyx stones, each containing six of them, on each shoulder, and likewise on the breast plate, each in a separate stone set in gold.

16. It was when doubled a square of a span, just sufficient to lay on the breast.

17. It is not certainly known what these stones were, they were all considered as of great price.

22. The chains are the same that were mentioned v. xiv, their place and use being then described.

26. *On the joining of the ephod.* SAM.

30. There has been much difference of opinion with respect to what is here called *urim and thummim*. But as there is no description of them, and the words signify nothing more than *bright and perfect*, all that is meant by them may be their goodness and the excellent
workman-

workmanship of them. In Ch. xxxix, where the actual making of all these articles is described, there is no mention of them.

Because no directions are given about the *formation* of the urim and thummim, but only about where to place them, some have thought that they were figures made by God himself and delivered to Moses. But then this would, no doubt, have been noticed, as well as the writing on the two tables. Whatever they were, it is evident that they were well known at this time. The Samaritan copy has, *Thou shalt make the urim and thummim, and put them, &c.*

In this place mention is made of the urim and thummim after that of the names of the children of Israel which were engraved on the precious stones, from which Spencer concludes, that the urim and thummim were different from those precious stones. But tho' the names are mentioned in this place, the stones are not particularly described. It is certain, however, that the urim and thummim are distinguished from the precious stones in Eccus. xlv, 10, 4, for both are enumerated in the account of the dress of the high priest.

To bear the judgment of the children of Israel, may mean to carry all weighty causes to God for his decision; or judgment may mean the *breast plate* itself, which is sometimes called *the breast plate of judgment*.

31. This garment covered the whole body, but was without sleeves; two holes admitting the arms, and another the head. But these two holes were not to be cut out of the piece of cloth, but the whole garment was to be woven with them in it.

32. These figures of pomegranates were of the same stuff of which the garment was made, but the bells were of gold. The form of this fruit was regarded as peculiarly beautiful. It was the principal ornament of the stately column of Solomon's temple.

35. If they presumed to officiate in any other manner than was here directed, it was an act of disobedience and impiety deserving of death.

39. These girdles Josephus says were of considerable length, so as to go round the body more than once; and when the priests were not officiating, both the ends hung down to their feet, but while they officiated they were thrown over the left shoulder.

41. Aaron was anointed by pouring oil on his head; but his sons by sprinkling some on their garments. *Sanctifying* means setting a part for the service of God.

42. The meaning of the word here rendered *linen* is very uncertain. Dr. Geddes thinks it only denotes something *singular*, probably respecting the workmanship.

43. Those garments were only worn during their officiating as priests. At other times they were habited like other persons. On this account the apostle Paul might not be able to know the Highpriest before whom he was arraigned.

Ch. XXIX. 4. The washing for the purpose of consecration was probably of the whole body. At other times the priests only washed their hands and feet before they officiated.

6. This crown, or diadem, was the fillet with the plate

plate of gold upon it. A fillet round the head was the original badge of royalty.

20. It is conjectured that the meaning of this putting the blood on the ear, the thumb, and the great toe, was to signify that they were to be attentive to, listen to, and study the law, and that with their hands and feet they should actively perform whatever it enjoined.

How decent was this ceremony compared with the taurobolium of the heathens, in which a person placed under a platform of boards, with many chinks in it, received all the blood of the victim that was sacrificed upon it, and came out with his head, his hair, and all his clothes full of it, and made a point of continuing in that filthy condition as long as possible.

The Egyptian priests shaved their whole bodies every other day, that they might have nothing that was deemed *excrementitious* about them during their ministration. *Spencer*, p. 800.

21. From this it appears that Aaron had a double anointing, the first with the oil poured on his head, and then, in common with his sons, he was sprinkled with the blood and oil.

In the Samaritan copy this verse follows the twenty seventh.

22. The rump of the sheep in the East is the choicest part of it, the tail being uncommonly large and fat.

24. The offerings thus presented were lifted up, and waved in all directions. What that signified is now uncertain. Abarbinel says it was to express that all the earth was the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, or that he is the possessor of heaven and earth.

26. There does not appear to have been any difference between the *תרומה*, which we render a *wave offering*, and the *תרופה*, which we call a *heave offering*, but that the former was only lifted up and down, and the other held towards all the points of the heavens.

27. Tho' in this particular case the right shoulder was burned, in future times both the breast and this shoulder belonged to the priest.

32. In this respect these sacrifices differed from peace offerings. For after God and the priest had had their portions, the rest might be carried to the house of the offerer, and eaten there.

36. By this it clearly appears that the word *atonement* does not always signify *cleansing from guilt*. For the altar was incapable of it; but only setting persons, or things, apart for the service of God. But before a guilty person could be fit to appear before God, his guilt must be removed by repentance; and then, according to the Hebrew ritual, by the performance of certain rites.

37. Nothing that had touched the altar could afterwards be applied to any private purpose, but was considered as the property of God.

38. The daily service of the tabernacle and temple consisted in the offering of these two lambs, one in the morning, and the other in the evening. On the Sabbath these sacrifices were doubled. (Num. xxviii, 98) and on the new moon, and other festivals, other sacrifices were added to them.

40. This is generally understood of an *homer*, or the tenth part of the epha; and a *hin* was a sixth part of an

epha; containing a wine gallon, two pints, and something more; so that a fourth part of this was a quart, and something more than a quarter of a pint.

42. *Meet thee.* SAM.

46. In this manner God signified his constant residence with his people; having an established household and a table regularly served, of which the people, when duly prepared, partook.

Ch. XXX. 2. It was a square of about half a yard, and twice as much in height.

3. A golden pan, or dish, was placed upon it, into which coals were put when incense was to be burned.

6. The clause *before the mercy seat that is over the testimony* is not in the Samaritan copy, and it contradicts itself, and the epistle of the Hebrews. For it places the altar of incense before the mercy seat. It is also wanting in many MSS.

10. On the day of atonement the Highpriest sprinkled the blood of the sin-offering before the mercy seat in the holy of holies, and then put some of it on the horns of this altar.

13. The reason why this tax was levied when the people were numbered does not sufficiently appear. It seems, however, to have been accompanied with an acknowledgment that they were God's people, whose lives he might have required, tho' he accepted a ransom in money. The shekel was about half a crown English money, the standard of it being kept in the tabernacle and temple. This tax was continued in after times, for the expences of the national worship; tho' to judge from this account of the original institution, it would appear

to be only an occasional tax, and to be levied only when the people were numbered.

18. Dr. Geddes has with its *cover*, instead of *foot*:

Nothing is said of the dimensions, or form, of this laver. But as that in Solomon's temple called the *Brazen sea*, was circular, it is probable that this was of that form. Water would be very necessary for the priests when they were employed in sacrificing, and also to wash their hands and feet before any other service.

23. This was myrrh that flowed of itself from the tree, and purer than that which is procured by expression. There are two kinds of cinnamon, that which was to be used here was the sweet scented. It probably came from India, and it is what is called, Jer. vii, 20, *the sweet cane from a far country*. The prophets speak of it as a foreign commodity of great value. It was part of the Tyrian trade. Ez. xxvii, 19.

24. This cassia was probably that which the ancients called *costus*, the best of which was brought from Arabia, and was white. It was used by the heathens on their altars, as well as frankincense.

It was agreeable to the customs of antiquity that certain things should be appropriated to the use of princes, and it was disrespectful to them, and an encroachment on their prerogatives, for any other person to use them, as purple in clothing, &c. On this principle might an oil of this particular composition, and other things, be confined to the use of the sanctuary.

33. This order was, no doubt, with a view to make this ointment, which was not to be applied to any other

than this purpose of religion, to be regarded with more respect.

34. *Stacte* was probably the liquid part of myrrh, pressed out by art. This was used in the sacrifices of the heathens. This *galbanum* was not such as is sold in our shops, and which has an offensive smell; but a fragrant kind, which grew near mount Amanus in Syria. Frankincense was used by the heathens in their sacrifices. *Onycha* is an odoriferous shell in the Indies and the Red sea, thought to be so aromatic from the fish feeding on the *spica nardi*, which grows there. This, at least, is the account of Dioscorides.

36. It was to be burned on the altar of incense.

38. To preserve the greater reverence for this incense, it was not to be applied to any common use, any more than the anointing oil.

Ch. XXXI. 3. The *spirit of God* means an excellent spirit, or a great genius with respect to the arts in which he was to be employed.

5. It was not only in one art that he excelled, but in several, and of very different kinds.

12. The observance of the sabbath had been insisted upon more than once before. The frequent repetition of this injunction shews the importance of it in the Hebrew institutions.

14. This seems to imply that if the profanation of the sabbath was private, so that no cognizance could be taken of it by man, God would interfere to punish it in some exemplary manner. But it appears from the history, that not only this precept, but every other relating to their religion, was generally violated; without any particular

particular judgment immediately following. The punishment, however, was only deferred, and fell upon the whole nation.

18 Nothing could give greater weight to these ten commandments, than being thus written without human means, after being pronounced by the Divine Being himself, in the hearing of a whole nation. Had these tables been preserved, or any fragments of them, they would justly have been deemed the most valuable of all relicks. Among the great number of forged relicks, no part of these tables was ever pretended to be found. We see, however, the hand of God in the works of nature every day, without attending to them as his workmanship; and many do this without acknowledging that they had any author at all.

Ch. XXXII. There is not, perhaps, any circumstance in the whole of the Jewish history so extraordinary as the idolatry of the Israelites in worshipping the golden calf, so soon after the solemn giving of the law in the hearing of all the people, and the express prohibition of the use of any image in divine worship. But there are several circumstances in the history, which, if they be duly attended to, will lessen the improbability of the fact.

1. They were not apprized before hand of the long absence of Moses; and finding that he did not return, not daring to go up to the mountain to seek him, and knowing that he was without food, they naturally concluded that he was dead, and might think that God, as well as his prophet, had forsaken them. In these circumstances they would not be disposed to pay much attention to any particular precept that had been deliver-

ed to them, but had not been reduced to writing; especially as they did not mean to worship any other God; and having been long accustomed to the use of images, they might think that the departure from the mere mode of worship could not be any great offence. Moses being gone, they next applied to Aaron, as the person who next to Moses was most in favour with God, and best qualified to give them advice and assistance.

3. It is possible that by this proposing an expensive expedient, he might hope to divert them from their purpose; but their superstition prevailed over their avarice.

4. Instead of *fashioning with a graving tool*, this passage may be translated, *he received it* (viz. the gold that they brought him) *and put it up in a bag*, after which he made a mould, and cast it into the form of a calf; but not to represent any of the gods of Egypt, but their own God, who had triumphed over them in their deliverance. For the head and horns of a bull would represent the power of their God, as well as that of any other.

5. Accordingly, the festival which followed the sacrifice before the idol is called *a feast to Jehovah*, and not to any of the gods of Egypt. After the sacrifice they indulged themselves, as all the heathens did, in riot and merriment. The same word that is here rendered *to play*, sometimes means committing fornication. But as Moses observed nothing but music and dancing when he returned to them, and they were under the direction of Aaron, it is not probable that they would soon fall into so great an enormity.

7. This language implies displeasure, as if they were no longer his people, but Moses's.

10. This could only be said to try Moses, as the command to sacrifice Isaac had been to try Abraham.

11. In reply to God's saying that *he*, viz. Moses, had brought the people out of Egypt, he calls them *his people*. This is an excellent specimen of earnest but humble intercession, similar to that of Abraham in the case of Sodom.

15. Some suppose that these tables were not written on both sides, but only that the writing was in two columns on the same side.

17. Joshua had waited at the foot of the mount for the return of Moses; and no doubt provision had been brought to him from the camp; but of the worshipping of the calf he appears to have had no knowledge.

19. As Moses is not blamed for this action, it was perhaps the effect of the tremor he was thrown into at the sight of this act of idolatry, so that he was hardly conscious of what he did. Or it might have been, as some suppose, a deliberate action, from a divine impulse, in sight of the people, to express the readiness of God to abandon them, and withdraw his laws and precepts from them.

20. Since metallurgy was pretty well known in this age, it is not wholly improbable but that the method of making gold brittle by a mixture of tin might be known; and after this it might be reduced to powder. Or it might have been dissolved in some menstruum, then evaporated, and the precipitate be thrown into the water,

of which all the people drank, so that they could not avoid taking some of it.

22. Aaron had, no doubt, in a manner, been compelled to do what he had done, and therefore no farther resentment was shewn to him personally.

25. By the term *naked* may be meant either unarmed and defenceless, or ashamed through guilt.

The people are thought by some to have been literally or nearly naked. the Egyptians and other heathens often appearing in this indecent manner in some of the rites of their religion. *Spencer*, p. 24.

28. They were directed either to make an indiscriminate slaughter of all that should come in their way, or only of those whom they found in idolatrous practices.

29. By this act of obedience and zeal, in which they had probably not spared their nearest friends and relations, they had approved themselves to God. By the people making no resistance during this slaughter, by a few of their number, they must have been impressed with the idea of Moses having given the order by a divine direction. Had they had any suspicion of Moses having imposed upon them in the delivery of the law, they surely would not have suffered themselves to be slaughtered in this manner.

34. By *angel* has generally been understood hitherto any visible symbol of the divine presence; and the same may be intended here, the Divine Being saying that he would proceed as he had begun, and conduct the people to their destined settlement; but that this offence should not be forgotten, but would be considered in his future

future dispensations with respect to them. And the Jews in general say that even their present sufferings, tho' at so great a distance from the transaction, are in some measure a punishment for the sin of their nation in the affair of the golden calf.

35. What was meant by this *plague* is not said. It may mean a pestilence, of the particulars of which no mention is made; or that this was one part of the reason of their being detained so long in the wilderness.

Ch. XXXIII. 4. This was, no doubt, said to try Moses and the people, and it had the desired effect, producing sincere contrition and repentance. But what could be the meaning of God saying that he should not go with them himself, but only *send an angel* with them, when in general, the angels that have been mentioned hitherto were only symbols of the divine presence, and accordingly spoke as from himself? We have seen, however, as I have observed before, that there is a difference in these that are equally called angels; only one of three that were entertained by Abraham speaking in the character of the Supreme Being, and the other two as only acting by commission from him. For they say (Gen. xix. 13) *The Lord hath sent us to destroy this place*. It may, therefore, have been one of these inferior persons that God said he would send, and not any that should immediately represent himself.

7. *Took a tent.* K.

This was an intimation of the divine displeasure, as if he would leave them to themselves. He seems to have given it this name to intimate that they who chose to reconcile themselves to God, and appear as his people

ple, might repair thither at the time of sacrifice. This was probably a tent where the heads of the people assembled on public occasions; for such there must have been, and not Moses's private tent where his own family only lived.

8. This was to express their anxiety concerning the event of this sacrifice, and their earnest desire of reconciliation.

9. This was a public testimony in favour of Moses, shewing the divine presence with him, and consequent approbation of his conduct.

10. This had the intended effect on all the people. They who were at a distance from the public tent made their submission, by bowing, or rather prostrating themselves, at the doors of their own tents.

11. The people seem to have heard some conversation of God with Moses, or some evident token of it, to convince them of the intimate access that he had to him. His communication with God was in a manner different from that of any of the subsequent prophets. It was always in open day time, and in an articulate voice, as from God himself, without the medium of any other being; whereas his communications with other prophets was generally in visions of the night, or through the medium of appearances called angels, who did not speak in their own name, but as messengers from God. Such was Gabriel with respect to Daniel.

The reason why Joshua did not leave the public tent might be his expectation of the speedy return of Moses, whom he seems to have attended as a servant. He is here

here called a *young man*, tho' he was sixty years old. But the term *young man*, seems to have been generally given to servants of every age, because menial offices were usually performed by young persons.

12. It is probable that Moses returned to the public tent, and there held the conversation that is now entered upon. *To know by name* seems to be an expression synonymous to distinguish in an honorable manner. Thus God said to Bezaleel, the son of Hur, Ex. xxxi, 2, *See I have called him by name, and I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and all manner of workmanship.* Moses was distinguished from other men in a still more extraordinary manner.

13. *Shew me thy way*, must, I should think, mean with the Arabic version *shew me thy favour*, or give me some evident token of it, in the conduct of this people. With this view he says, *Consider that this nation is thy people.*

14. In this God seems to have promised to do all that Moses had requested. He would himself go with the people, and carry them to their place of rest in the land of Canaan.

23. Moses having by his intercession obtained all that he had hitherto requested, is emboldened to petition for something more. Till this time he had only heard the voice of God, and had seen no appearance, but that of a luminous cloud, like fire. But imagining, as was natural, that the voice proceeded from something that had a *form*, tho' for good reasons this had not been made visible to the people at large, he was desirous of seeing

feeling it; and the Divine Being, in great condescension, informs him that his request could not be granted in its full extent, that his face would be too bright to be borne by him, but that he would shew him as much as he should be able to bear; and in the manner that this is described he must have been permitted to see something that he had not seen before. What this was we are not informed, but the effect of it was such a lustre on the countenance of Moses himself, that when he returned from the mount, the people could not bear to look upon him. As this appearance to Moses was when he was on the mountain, it is probable that when he removed the public tent from the camp, he had had it carried nearer to mount Sanai than it had been before.

While this glorious appearance passed before him, he heard an audible voice pronounce what is mentioned in the next chapter, v. vi. *The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands; forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation:* But on this day he had only the promise of what he should be permitted to see and hear.

Ch. XXXIV. 1. Moses having by his intercession obtained a promise of the restoration of the divine favour to the people, the covenant that had been made with them before is solemnly renewed, the two tables of stone restored, and the building of the tabernacle proceeds, as if there had been no interruption in the work.

These

These second tables, however, were prepared by Moses, and, not, like the former, by God himself. For of them it is said, *Ex. xxxii, 16, The tables were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, graven upon the tables.*

7. *And with him the innocent shall be justified.*

SAM.

This was the accomplishment of the promise that had been made to him the preceding day. The character of the Divine Being that is here solemnly declared, was particularly adapted to the present occasion, having forgiven the people the sin of worshipping the golden calf, so far as not on that account to cancel his promise to Abraham concerning the future prosperity of a nation descended from him, tho' he would not wholly remit the punishment of it with respect to those who were guilty of so great an offence.

8. After this declaration of the divine character, he makes another declaration, or covenant, concerning his future conduct with respect to the Israelites.

10 This must refer in part to his conducting them in a miraculous manner forty years in the wilderness, and giving them the possession of the land of Canaan; after subduing the Amorites, and passing the river Jordan; but perhaps principally to their final settlement in that country, when the whole of his conduct with relation to them would appear so extraordinary to all the world as to produce a thorough conviction of his universal dominion, and thereby put an end to idolatry and all false religion.

12 The

12. The Divine Being having declared what he would do for the people, repeats what he expected from them in return ; and the following precepts relate to such articles of their religion as were peculiar to it, and such as they would be most apt to neglect ; and not such as in themselves, and morally considered, were of the greatest importance.

18. The Hebrews had only three solemn festivals in the year, whereas the calendars of the heathens are full of them. And the occasions on which those of the Hebrews were instituted were certain remarkable events in their history, but those of the heathens were often fanciful and fabulous, as the lamentation of Isis for the death of Osiris, the rape of Proserpine, &c. The festivals of the Hebrews were celebrated with decent joy, but some of those of the heathens with all kinds of riot and excess.

The heathens put salt into their lustral water, and also extinguished in it a brand burning with brimstone. According to Virgil (*Æn.* vi, 230) they also used a branch of olive. *Spencer*, p. 776. 1 Sam. xx, 5.

The heathens sacrificed, or consecrated, a he goat to the moon at the beginning of every month, probably because the horns of that animal resembled it. *Ibid*, p. 814.

22. This festival was to be celebrated seven weeks after the passover. A respect to the number *seven* is very remarkable in the Hebrew ritual, as in the sabbatical year after seven years, and the jubilee after seven times seven years, &c. &c. &c.

24 They

24. They would naturally fear lest their enemies should take advantage of the deserted state of the country, when all the men capable of bearing arms should have left it, and be at a distance from the frontiers; and therefore God gives them a particular assurance that nothing of that kind should happen. And it is remarkable that it never appears to have been the case, even when they conformed to their religion with the greatest strictness. They might, however, have relaxed with respect to this observance, as they did with respect to the sabbath in the time of the Maccabees, tho' we have no account of it in Josephus or any other historian.

27. It does not follow that there was a separate writing of these particular precepts. They were included in the general system of their institutions. They are here repeated perhaps to shew that they were to be particularly attentive to them.

28. This is the second time that Moses was supported forty days without food, and would be a second trial of the patience of the people. But what they suffered in consequence of their disobedience on the former occasion was sufficient to deter them from any such conduct in future; and after these forty days, as after the former, God wrote the ten commandments upon tables of stone, which Moses had prepared for the purpose. *

29. This miraculous splendour on the countenance of Moses would be a proof of something very extraordinary

* If the writer was Moses, the passage relates to the precepts recited above, which consist of ten articles. If it was the Divine Being, it must relate to the ten commandments in the Decalogue. Dr. GORDON.

nary having happened to him. It, was, no doubt, the effect, natural or supernatural, of that appearance, the back parts of which only he had been permitted to look on. It must have been very dazzling, much superior to any electric light, when Aaron and the elders of the people were deterred from approaching him, so that he was obliged to cover his face with a vail while they conversed with him. How long this extraordinary appearance continued is not said.

Ch. XXXV. 1. Moses having received a message from God, renewing his covenant with the people, he assembles them again, to give them a strict charge concerning it, and to make preparation for constructing the tabernacle, which was to be the place of his residence with them.

3 He lays particular stress on the observance of the sabbath, as perhaps the precept they were in the greatest danger of neglecting, and by means of the observance of which they would be reminded of their duty in other respects. For, having no work to do on that day, they would naturally employ a part of it in the study of their law. And it appears that when they had prophets, they had recourse to them (and no doubt to the priests and Levites, who were qualified to instruct them) on that day.

They were not to light a fire for the purpose of preparing victuals, or any other work; but they were allowed to do it for the purpose of keeping themselves warm, as well as to put on their clothes. Also when they had synagogues, they might resort to them. In short, they might on the sabbath do any thing that could

not

not be called *labour*. But in our Saviour's time the Jews had carried their observances respecting the sabbath to a most superstitious length.

5. To make the contribution for the construction of the tabernacle a free gift, was giving the people an opportunity [of shewing whether they were in earnest in accepting the covenant that God had made with them, and his proposal to reside among them. And the abundance of their contributions sufficiently proved their sincerity at that time. They readily parted with their ornaments, and every thing of much value, for that purpose.

22. What our translators call *bracelets*, Dr. Geddes renders *clasps*.

The word *תבליט* rendered *tablets* in our translation, which has been variously rendered, Dr. Geddes thinks was probably the same with the Roman *bullæ*, and he says that such balls, or lockets, are now worn by the Arabs.

35. All persons who understood any kind of curious workmanship were invited to take a part in this great undertaking; but two persons were particularly appointed to direct and superintend the whole, as being eminently qualified for the purpose; not probably by divine inspiration, but having acquired their skill by their own genius and application.

Ch. XXXVI. 5. There appears to have been a generous emulation in all the people to contribute to this work, in expectation, no doubt, of executing something superior to any thing the world had seen before, tho' the work could not be shewn to any strangers, nor to all

among themselves. If the heathens had any temples at this time, which is not certain, we have no account of any structure whatever so costly as this; nor is it probable that there were in any nation more ingenious workmen of all kinds, than were employed in the construction of this tabernacle. It did not require workmanship of one kind only, but of every kind in which the ingenuity of man had in that age been exercised; in wood, in carving figures, engraving on precious stones, overlaying with gold, and casting of metal in various molds, &c. They could work in gold, copper and iron. They could weave tapestry, and embroider, so as to make the figures of cherubims on linen or cotton. If they did not purchase cloths of blue and purple, they must have died these colours themselves. In short, there is no art known to the antients a thousand years after this time with which the Israelites do not appear to have been well acquainted. And as to the great art of *writing*, tho' it was probably known in the time of Moses, there is no evidence of there being any *books* prior to his. There is no mention of any composition in his writings besides a few songs, which might have been only committed to memory. The book of Job may have been as old as the time of Moses, but could not have been much older. Some of the books of the Hindoos may have been prior to those of Moses; but he could not have had any knowledge of them, and as far as we can judge, the style and composition of them is by no means superior to his.

I am far from supposing that these arts, which imply a high degree of civilization, were peculiar to the Israelites;

Israelites ; but they show that they were not behind the rest of the world in any thing of the kind ; so that if any people can be said to be *civilized*, they were so. As to religious knowledge, they certainly had not of themselves any juster notions than the rest of the world ; but their principles and institutions are infinitely superior to those of any nation of antiquity, and therefore cannot be ascribed to any thing but supernatural illumination.

Ch. XXXVII. In this chapter all the articles in the furniture of the tabernacle are particularly described, to shew that they were made according to the directions given before.

Ch. XXXVIII. This chapter contains an account of every thing that was within the tabernacle.

2. *It was four square*, is not in the Samaritan copy, nor in several MSS.

8. *Mirrors were made of polished metal, chiefly of brass*,

This assembling of the women with their mirrors, for which it does not appear that they had any directions, Spencer supposes to have been derived from the customs of women at the temples of Egypt. To the temple of Isis they went in crowds, some carrying a mirror, some a sistrum and some garlands, and some combs ; on the idea, it is imagined, of presenting to her whatever could be agreeable to her as a female. The LXX add that they fasted on this occasion, and in Egypt this was done fasting. *Spencer*, p. 1090. In *Ezekiel* viii, 14, we read of women weeping for Thammuz at the gate of the temple.

Dr. Geddes contends that this verse ought to be rendered, *He made a laver of brass &c. under the inspection of the women who ministered at the door, &c.* as some other translators had done before him. But what ministry had women at that place, and why was their inspection more necessary than that of men?

24. The talent of silver which was three thousand shekels, is computed to have been worth three hundred and fifty three pounds eleven shillings, and some odd pence English money, and the talent of gold fourteen times as much, viz. five thousand and seventy six pounds three shillings and ten pence.

Ch. XXXIX. The art of wire drawing was unknown in this early age. In order to make a wire, they beat the metal into a thin plate, and then cut it into long filaments.

8. As nothing is said in this place about making the *urim and thummim*, it is inferred that nothing more was meant by these words besides the *brightness* of the gems, and the *perfection* of the workmanship in the setting of them in the breast plate.

Ch. XL. This was a year within fourteen days after their departure from Egypt. That so great a work as this should have been accomplished in so short a time, and should have been undertaken so soon after their leaving Egypt, when it might have been imagined that they would have had other cares and business, more immediately relating to their future settlement, is very extraordinary. It proves that they were under no common direction. No other people leaving one settlement,
and

and marching towards another, yet so peaceably employed themselves in this manner. The first thing they would naturally set about would be, to prepare themselves for war, and procure the means of subsistence; and this would more especially have been the case with the Israelites, who had a view to a settlement in a country already occupied by very warlike nations, far more numerous than themselves. But instead of attacking them suddenly, while they would in some measure have been unprepared for such an invasion, they gave them all the time they could wish to prepare for their defence.

15. This was the consecration not of Aaron and his sons only, but of the family to future ages. For after this only the highpriest was anointed, not the other priests; and that in a much less solemn manner, and with fewer ceremonies, than those that are here described.

17—18. The erection of the tabernacle, and the consecration of Aaron and his sons must have taken up fourteen days, seven for each.

25. Moses himself seems to have done all this, acting as a priest, or in a similar character still higher than that, tho' probably for the last time; Aaron, according to appointment, doing every thing of this kind afterwards.

29. *Before the door.* SAM.

35. The appearance of this cloud, the symbol of the divine presence, was a sufficient indication of the divine approbation of what had been done. It was like taking

possession of the house that had been provided for him.

38. This supernatural appearance seems to have remained upon the tabernacle all the time they were in the wilderness; and their journeyings were directed by it in the manner that is here described.

NOTES

NOTES ON

LEVITICUS.

THIS book has its title from the subject of it, relating chiefly to the *Levites*; containing rules concerning sacrifices, and other things in which they were principally concerned.

Ch. I. 1. These directions were given to Moses not in the mount, where he received the general laws contained in the preceding book, and the description of the tabernacle and its utensils, but from the mercy seat upon the ark, the place purposely prepared for God's peculiar presence, and where he was to be attended upon, as the God and governor of his people.

2. The tabernacle being now erected, and consecrated, particular directions are given about every thing that was to be done in it. Every thing that was brought as an offering, or sacrifice, was such as was proper for the food of man; and in this the original idea of a sacrifice was adhered to; being besides a *present*, in token of homage, an *entertainment*, of which the offerer in many cases partook, as a token of peace and friendship between God and man. From this natural idea

the heathens, for various reasons, often departed, as when they sacrificed horses to the sun, wolves to Mars, dogs to Hecate, asses to Priapus, &c.

All the sacrifices, and every other rite of the Hebrew religion, were performed by men, and in the day time; whereas many of the heathen rites were performed by women, and some of them in the night.

3. Sacrifices were principally of three kinds. 1st, Whole burnt offerings which were entirely consumed except the skin. Of these even the priests did not partake. 2d. Sin offerings. Of these part was burned, and the rest was the portion of the priests. 3d, Peace offerings. Of these part was burned, part belonged to the priest, and the rest was eaten by the offerer and his friends.

The Egyptians sacrificed only males, and in the Mosaic institutions these appear to have been considered as of most value; but in many cases females were accepted, from which, as well as from many other circumstances it is evident that Moses did not borrow his ritual from the Egyptians. And in many things the rites of the Hebrew religion were the very reverse of those of all the heathens. According to Strabo, the Indians offered to their gods only animals that were strangled, and they ate of the sacrifice, as feasting with their gods. *Spencer*, p. 604.

4. The act of laying the hand on the head of the beast by the person who brought it was, in all cases, a necessary part of the ceremonial previous to the sacrificing of it. It was the solemn presentation of it.

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5. The killing of the sacrifice might be done by the person who brought it, but it was generally done by the priests or Levites, who were, of course, best acquainted with the proper manner of doing it.

8. The fat of the inwards not connected with the flesh, which we generally denominate *suet* or *tallow*, was always burned on the altar, and served to feed the fire.

11. All the greater sacrifices, such as the burnt offerings, sin offerings, and trespass offerings, were to be killed in this place; but peace offerings and others might be killed in any other place. The reason of this difference does not appear.

17. Whether the sacrifice was of more or less value, which depended upon the ability of the offerers, it was equally acceptable to God.

Ch. II. 1. That which in our common version is called a meat offering did not consist of any flesh meat, but only of flour, oil, and frankincence; but it always accompanied the sacrifice of an animal.

3. The things that are called *most holy* were in general the part of God only, and were wholly consumed on the altar; tho' some that are so called were in part eaten by the priests; whereas all those that are only called *holy* were in part eaten by the offerers.

4. Besides offerings of flour, cakes ready baked were likewise presented; but they were not burned on the altar, but given to the priests. The word rendered *pan* was probably a thin plate of metal, on which cakes might be baked very quickly.

11. The heathens, it is said, offered no bread but what was leavened ; but no leaven was brought to the altar of God. Honey was also burned with the sacrifices of the heathens, and perhaps for that reason it was forbidden to the Israelites ; so far were they from copying the rites of idolatrous nations. Libations of honey were made to the infernal gods, and sometimes to the celestial ones. *Spencer*, p. 347.

12. The first fruits that are called in Hebrew תבואה were those of corn, the grains of which being then unripe were dried, and then pounded into flour.

13. As salt was always used in the food of men, it was never to be omitted in what was considered as the table of God. In the East the eating of salt with any person is more particularly considered as a mark of friendship, and therefore it is here called *the salt of the covenant*, as binding the parties together. Salt was not originally used in the heathen sacrifices.

14. The first fruits that are mentioned in this place, and called in Hebrew בכורים were ripe fruits of various kinds, and not those mentioned, v. 12.

Ch. III. 1. Peace offerings, of which we have an account in this place, were calculated to express a state of peace and friendship between God and the offerer, by, as it were, eating at the same table. Part of the sacrifice was burned on the altar, as the portion of the Deity, part was the portion of the priests as his ministering servants, and the remainder was eaten by the offerer and his friends. These sacrifices were generally voluntary, by way of thanksgiving to God for favours received of him.

4. The part of the liver that is here mentioned is one of the lobes, but which of them it was is not very certain.

6. Males only were made whole burnt offerings, but for peace offerings females were accepted. But tho' birds were received as burnt offerings, when the offerer could not afford any thing more expensive, they were not received for peace offerings; probably because, if they had been divided, as peace offerings were required to be, the several portions would have been too inconsiderable.

9. The whole rump of a sheep was burned on the altar, but not that of a bullock or a goat, because in the sheep of that country the rump, and especially the tail, which went with it, is the most delicious part. The tail only of some sheep weigh as much as forty pounds, and never less than ten or twelve, and they consist chiefly of fat resembling marrow.

14. This prohibition was perhaps confined to the fat of animals that were sacrificed, and did not extend to those that were killed for private use. And the fat that was forbidden to be eaten in beasts that were sacrificed was only that which was loose from the flesh, as that which covered the inwards.

17. The antient idolaters partook of the blood of their sacrifices; and this was perhaps one reason why it was forbidden to the Israelites.

Ch. IV. 1. This chapter having a separate introduction, viz. *The Lord spake unto Moses, saying*, seems to imply that the contents of it were delivered at a different time from those of that which precedes it. Indeed,
it

it is not probable that any man could have remembered so many minute particulars as respected all these different articles, if they had been communicated at the same time without interruption.

2. Offences committed through ignorance required a legal purification; and this would have a good effect on the people, producing constant attention to their conduct. For the same reason involuntary homicide was followed by the inconvenience of a man's leaving the usual place of his abode, and residing a certain time in a city of refuge.

3. There is much difference of opinion about the meaning of the word *חטאת* which is rendered *sin offering*, and *זבח* which is called a *trespass offering*; the cases in which they were required very much resembling each other. Dr. Geddes says the latter were for offences committed, and the former for duties omitted, or negligently performed. A friend of bishop Patrick was of opinion that the *trespass offering*, was for a case in which either a person was dubious, or did some damage to other men; and that the *sin offering* respected offences of any other nature. Only rams, or male lambs, were received for trespass offerings, and were not required for sin offerings. The blood of the sin offering was sprinkled on the horns of the altar; but that of a trespass offering was sprinkled all round it. Sin offerings were offered for the whole congregation, but trespass offerings for private persons.

6. This was never done but for the whole congregation. The number *seven* frequently occurs, tho' for what reason does not appear, in acts of religion. The heathens

heathens had the same respect for it on that account. Apuleius, speaking of dipping his head seven times in the sea for the purpose of purification, says that "the divine Pythagoras taught that this number was above all others most proper for religion." The original distinction of this number was probably the same with that of the division of time into periods of seven days, or weeks; and, as Moses says, from the work of creation being accomplished in six days, and God's resting on the seventh.

7. This was peculiar to sacrifices for the highpriest, and those for the whole congregation. In the temple of Jerusalem there were two holes, as the Jews say, one on the West side, and the other on the South side, of the altar, by which the blood was conveyed into a canal under ground to the brook Kedron. Maimonides says that the antient Zabii collected the blood of their sacrifices in a vessel, or little pit, about which they sat, and ate the flesh, imagining the gods to feast on the blood.

12. This rite of burning the whole of the sacrifice undivided, without the camp, or the city of Jerusalem, and carrying the blood to be sprinkled before the ark, was used in two cases, viz. that of a sin of the highpriest, and that of all the people. Of the other sin offerings the priests might partake.

On the East side of the tabernacle there was a place for the ashes when they were taken from the altar, which were afterwards carried into a clean place without the camp. From the temple of Jerusalem they were carried out at the East gate, into the valley that was between the city and the mount of Olives.

13 Having

13. Having offended against some negative precept, forbidding particular things to be done.

16. The priest who was *anointed* means the high-priest.

23. This may be rendered, *And he acknowledged himself to be guilty, or his sin be shewn unto him.*

26. It appears from Ch. vi. 26—29, and Numb. xviii, 9—10, that the flesh of the sin offering was eaten by the priest and his sons in the sanctuary, but in no other place.

Ch. V. 1. Houbigant supposes that there has been a loss of some words in the original, and that it might have been, *And if a soul sin, and any person, &c. (i. e. another person) hear, &c.*

2. According to the institutions of Moses nothing rendered a person unclean but what actually conveyed the idea of something offensive to the senses, as the touch of a dead body, that of a leprous person, &c. whereas with the heathens many things were deemed unclean, and conveyed pollution, for which no natural reason could be assigned, but only some superstitious notion, as the hair and nails, and other things sufficiently clean in their nature, but classed with *excrementitious matter*. On the other hand, leprous persons, Josephus observes, were so far from being regarded with aversion by the heathens, that they were sometimes employed in the most important offices, as Naaman by the king of Assyria.

The Hebrew purgations were also less troublesome than many of those of the heathens. According to the institutions of Moses the touch of a dead body rendered
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a person unclean seven days only, Num. xix, 11 ; but the Syrian goddess was not to be approached in less than thirty days after the same accident. *Spencer*, p. 189.

3. Such as the leprosy, and other things mentioned Ch. xii, xiii, xv.

4. If he forget his vow.

6. Here the name of trespass offering is given to that which is immediately after called a sin offering. But perhaps this is some error in the Hebrew copy.

9. The flesh belonged to the priest.

11. The omission of the oil and the frankincense in this case may have been out of regard to the poverty of the offerer.

14. This is another distinct communication on a different subject. Having made this observation before, it does not need to be repeated again.

Ch. VI. 4 This fine was for those who voluntarily confessed their guilt. If they denied it, and were convicted in a court of justice, the fine was much greater. See Exod. xxii, i, 7, 9.

9. As flesh requires much time before it can be consumed in the fire, the priests attended all night to keep up the fire, that every part of it might be wholly consumed before the morning.

10. The ashes were carried to the East side of the altar, as the farthest from the holy place.

13. There does not appear to have been any reason for keeping up this fire, but that it might be ready for the uses there were for it. Perpetual fires were kept up
by

by many of the heathens for no other purpose than to perform their devotions before them, as emblems of the sun, the object of their worship.

18. No vessel used for this purpose was ever to be applied to any common use. It is not the person, but the thing, that is here intended:

23. Abarbinel thinks that only the highpriest was bound to offer this meat offering every day. Other priests did it only when they entered on their ministry.

26. In some sacrifices what was eaten by the priests was eaten only in the precincts of the sanctuary.

27. This, no doubt, was intended to impress upon the minds of the people a reverence for every thing belonging to the worship of God. No part of this blood was to remain on any garment, but it was to be carefully washed out.

28. Earthen vessels being porous, might be supposed to retain some effluvia of what had been put into them. They were, besides, of small value.

Ch. VII. 2. The Jews say that there was a scarlet line drawn round the middle of the altar, and that the blood of whole burnt offerings was sprinkled about this line, and that of trespass and peace offerings below it. But nothing is said of this line in the scriptures.

8. It is supposed that it was the skin of the animals that had been sacrificed which God applied to the purpose of clothing Adam and Eve. The heathen priests had the skins of the animals they sacrificed, and they often

often applied them to superstitious uses, as to sleep on them in their temples, with a view to get prophetic dreams.

10. All the priests who officiated on that day had their share, as well as those who ministered at the altar.

12. Peace offerings were either by way of thanksgiving for mercies received, or for obtaining others.

13. Leaven was used only in peace offerings, because of them the offerers partook; and as it was in the way of festivity, they were not required to eat any thing that was unpleasant to them, as at the passover.

15. This was to prevent their becoming putrid, or being applied to any superstitious or profane use.

17. It could not have been kept beyond the third day without danger of its becoming putrid.

18. In this case the sacrifice had been of no use, and therefore must have been repeated, with other offerings to atone for the offence.

20. In this case it should seem that the punishment was being no longer considered as an Israelite. If it was done in contempt; perhaps some divine judgment was intended.

38. He was not upon the mount, but only near it, when these directions were given.

Ch. VIII. 2. It contributed to add to the respect of the priesthood that it was confined to one family, and not accessible to all the nation. With the Egyptians the priesthood was hereditary, but not with the heathens in general.

Herodotus says that the Egyptian priests bathed twice every day, and twice in the night. *Spencer*, p. 1174.

5. This setting apart the family of Aaron for the priesthood is thought to have taken place in the first month of the second year after they left Egypt. We have an account of the performance of what was directed before, in the communication with Moses on mount Sinai.

8. No mention is here made of the breast plate, but only of the urim and thummim, from which it is probable that they meant the same thing.

12. The consecration of Aaron and his sons was probably at a different time from that of the tabernacle and its utensils, seven days being employed in each.

Ch. IX. 1. This *eighth day* was that which succeeded the seven that were employed in the consecration of Aaron and his sons. It seems also to have been the first day of the feast of unleavened bread, or the 15th day of this month; for on the 14th in the evening, which was the last day of the consecration of the priests, the passover was kept. Num. ix. 25.

4. Thus a signal appearance of the symbol of divine presence was announced, viz. the luminous cloud, and the descent of fire from heaven to consume this sacrifice.

23. This *glory* had entered the tabernacle, and from that time had not been visible without, but now was to appear to all the people, as it did when they passed through the Red sea, and when they journeyed.

24. *They were terrified, and fell on their faces.*
LXX.

This was the last of the sacrifices on this solemn occasion, and probably at the time of the evening sacrifice.

It

It was a solemn and visible ratification of every thing that had been done ; so as to satisfy all the people that it had been by divine direction. From this time the fire was kept continually burning.

Ch X. 1. Several irregularities in the behaviour of these two men are pointed out by the Jewish writers, but all that is particularly mentioned here is their making use of other fire than that on the altar, which had been lighted from heaven, and with it they had burned the incense in the holy place. It may, however, be inferred from the prohibition of drinking wine during the time of their ministration, which immediately follows, that they had been drinking more than they ought to have done at the preceding feast on the sacrifice of peace offerings. Such an example as this, on persons of their high rank, being next to Aaron himself, must have made a great and lasting impression on the minds of all the people, and especially of the priests, and have been of great use in making them exact in the observance of the directions that were given for the performance of every part of their duty. And it was of particular importance that the first offence, whether committed through wilfulness, or carelessness, should be punished in this exemplary manner.

2. The fire being said to come *from the Lord*, was probably from the place of his presence over the ark in the holy of holies, before which they stood. This must have been evidently miraculous, since there was no fire, or light, in that place.

4. These persons not being priests, that is of the family of Aaron, could not regularly go into the holy place.

place. This, therefore, must have been an extraordinary case, for which Moses, no doubt, thought himself sufficiently authorized.

5. It appears that tho' the fire had killed these men, it had not affected their garments, which was another evidence of their death having been occasioned by a supernatural cause.

6. They were not to shave their heads, or tear their hair, as was usual in mournings. But tho' the priests were not to appear in mourning on that occasion, it was not forbidden to the people.

7. The services then depending were not finished, and they must not have left any part of their duty undischarged.

9. The Jews interpret this to mean that they should not drink so much as to intoxicate them, but that they were allowed a fourth part of a log of wine, or an egg shell and an half full, before they went into the sanctuary.

In general every thing leading to indecency was strictly forbidden to the Hebrew priests; whereas things the most indecent were frequently practised by the heathen priests and worshippers in their most sacred services, especially by the priests of Bacchus.

12. Here Moses repeats some precepts, perhaps lest the minds of Aaron and his sons should be in such a state of consternation, as not perfectly to recollect them.

20. This irregularity in the conduct of Aaron passed without punishment, on account of the state of mind into which the death of his sons had thrown him. He had

had also thought that he was not in a proper condition to partake of a feast (for such the eating of meat that had been offered in sacrifice was deemed) and no other person being allowed to eat of it, he had thought it was most proper to burn it. His intention being good, the irregularity of the action was overlooked.

Ch. XI. 1. In this chapter, and some of the following, Moses treats of different kinds of impurity, affecting men's food, their persons, their garments, and habitations; and they are addressed in the first instance to Aaron as well as Moses. He was now fully consecrated to his office; and it belonged to the priests in particular to distinguish the several cases that are here mentioned.

2. There was no antient nation but what was in some measure directed in the choice of food by ideas of religion; but no rules of this kind are so consonant to reason as those prescribed to the Hebrews. The Egyptians abstained from the flesh of sheep, beans, and other things, without pretending that they were unwholesome; and the Syrians from all kinds of fish. The restrictions under which the religion of the Hindoos lay them are numerous, and founded on no sensible reason at all. The higher classes of them abstain from all animal food, except that which is offered in sacrifice. But it is generally allowed that the flesh of those animals which the Israelites were forbidden to eat is unwholesome, or very probably so, in the climate of Palestine. The only case about which there can be much doubt is that of swine's flesh, which we find to be equally grateful and whole-

some. But it is strongly objected to in all Eastern countries, being thought to promote leprosy, a disease to which the people of those countries are much subject.

Cæsar says that the Britons abstained from hares, hens, and geese. *Bell. Gall.* v. p. 150. The Egyptians, according to Porphyry, would not eat the cow, any of the horned cattle that were twins, those marked with particular spots, or any way deformed. They also refrained from eating turtle doves, and from many fishes. *Spencer*, p. 130.

3. This general rule is very intelligible.

5. This animal, in Hebrew *shaphan*, Mr. Bruce with great probability supposes to be the *ashkoko* of Ethiopia. It lives among rocks, and is very different from the rabbit.

7. The Jews in a later period had a more particular aversion to hog's flesh than to any other kind of food, perhaps in consequence of having been compelled to eat of it as a mark of their renouncing their religion in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. But perhaps because great use was made of the hog in various heathen rites, as those of magic, lustrations, solemn covenants, &c. *Ib.* p. 137.

8. To touch the carcase of any animal that was not proper for food subjected them to uncleanness, to remove which certain rites of purification were prescribed.

9. This general rule relating to fish is easily to be understood; which is a great advantage.

13. No such general rule is laid down about birds, as about beasts and fishes; and therefore the Jews say that

that any that are not here specified may be eaten by them. There is much uncertainty in the rendering of some of the following names. But they generally denote birds of prey, which are easily distinguished, and which few persons could bear to eat.

16. The word rendered *cuckow*, Bochart thought to be the *sea-gull*. But Dr. Shaw is of opinion that it is the *safsaf*, or *Rhaad* of the East, a granivorous and gregarious bird which wants the hinder toe.

18. The word that is here rendered *a swan*, Jonathan, the Chaldee paraphrast, supposes to be a kind of owl.

19. There is great uncertainty with respect to many of twenty different birds above mentioned, which can only be removed by a better acquaintance with the country which they frequented, and the names by which they are distinguished by the natives.

20. This is a general rule concerning insects.

22. There are several species of locusts which are commonly eaten in the East, and considered as wholesome, and even delicious food. Four kinds of them are here mentioned. For that which is rendered *grass-hopper* is one of them.

29. The word rendered *weasel* Bochart thinks to be the *mole*. The same word in the Syriac and Arabic has that signification; and the word rendered *mole* in v. 30 he thinks to be the *camelion*. The *snail* is probably a kind of lizard.

33. Their earthen vessels were probably unglazed, as has been observed before.

35. Their ovens were portable earthen pots, such as are still used in many countries for baking. DR. GARDNER.

36. If there was plenty of water, the effect of any thing offensive in it would be inconsiderable. Besides fountains were of too much value to be abandoned on account of a casual impurity, if the water had not been continually changing.

37. Tho' it was unfit for food, it was not the less proper for feed.

42. This rule does not comprehend such small insects as feed on plants, but only the larger kinds that crawl on the earth.

45. Every thing that suggested the idea of impurity, tho' affecting only the body, was to be avoided, out of regard to their relation to God, a Being of perfect purity, or holiness.

Ch. XIII. 4. All the days of her uncleanness were forty. During the first seven days she neither partook of any thing that was holy, such as the peace offerings of the family, nor conversed with any person. Even her husband did not eat or drink with her, and those who attended upon her were unclean. The rest of the forty days she was only excluded from the sanctuary, and partaking of holy things. The heathens would not admit their women into their temples till a considerable time after childbirth, and superstitious persons would not go into houses where they were.

5. Hippocrates says that women were sooner cleansed after the birth of a male than that of a female. But this is not remarked in colder climates.

6. One of the offerings here prescribed was a sin offering, which shews that it had no necessary relation to moral impurity, or guilt. A sin offering was likewise prescribed when a leper was purified.

Ch. XIII. 1 The following directions about cases of leprosy are given to Aaron as well as to Moses; he and his descendants being more immediately concerned to attend to them.

2. The leprosy appears in three forms, a swelling, a scab, and a bright spot on the skin. Pliny says that this loathsome disease was peculiar to Egypt. It might have originated there, but of this we have no certain account. There was no distinct order of physicians among the Israelites; and the priests would have more general knowledge than the rest of the people. Besides they were to be particularly concerned in the rites to be observed with respect to leprosy. The signs of the true leprosy, which was an infectious disease, are pointed out by the Divine Being himself, no doubt to prevent the inconvenience that would have arisen from ignorance and superstition in this case.

30 For the hair to change its colour, the juices from which it arises must have been depraved.

13. This was some natural discharge, by which the disease was prevented, and was not infectious.

46. He was to give notice to all who came near him, that there was danger to them in a nearer approach.

47. What it was that was called leprosy in a garment we cannot tell; but it must have been well known at the time. Both linen and woollen are subject to be preyed

upon by various insects, some perhaps not visible to the naked eye; but that which made the garment green was probably some vegetable matter, and the redness might be the decayed state of those vegetables. It must have been a vegetable the seeds of which it was not possible to destroy. The minute plant that grows in water, and makes it look green, on which I made my experiments in the production of dephlogisticated air by means of light, is of this nature.

Ch. XIV. 4. This probably means any small bird that was proper for food. Maimonides acknowledges that he did not know why purification was to be made with these things. The cedar wood was probably to serve for a handle to the instrument, and the bunch of hyssop was tied to it with the scarlet thread.

7. This was probably to signify that the leper was then at liberty to go where he pleased, as well as the bird.

5. Over a vessel which contained spring water.

10. The *log* was the smallest measure among the Hebrews, containing about half a pint.

34. What is here called leprosy in a building, must have been some saline efflorescence, which spread in the plaster, and rendered it offensive and unhealthy.

38. Probably something more was done besides shutting up the house, tho' this might be in order to observe whether it spread any farther, as what was called the true leprosy would do.

The following fact may perhaps throw some light on this very obscure subject. "All the houses of Mal-

"ta,"

“ta,” says Dolomieu, “are built of a fine grained limestone, of a loose and soft texture, but which hardens by exposure to the air. There is a circumstance which hastens its destruction, and reduces it to powder, viz. when it is wetted by sea water. After this it never dries, but is covered by a saline efflorescence, and a crust is formed some tenths of an inch thick, mixed with common salt, nitre, and nitrated lime. Under this crust the stone moulders into dust, the crust falls off, and other crusts are successively formed, till the whole stone is destroyed. Nor does it stop here, but after some time affects all the neighbouring stones in the wall. The stones most subject to this malady, are those that contain the most magnesia.”

Kirwan's Geology, p. 148.

Tho' this disease in the houses of Palestine may not be the very same with this, it may be of a similar nature; some saline efflorescence, causing a decay of the materials, and being perhaps likewise offensive, it may have obtained the name of *leprosy*.

40. An *unclean place* was a place where dung and other offensive matters were thrown. Other places were called *clean*; and into a clean place only were the ashes from the altar to be carried; and not to a common ash pit or dunghill.

Ch. XV. 2. This disease called *gonorrhoea*, which often arises from lewdness, is said to be exceedingly offensive in hot countries.

3. Tho' the coagulation might stop the running, the uncleanness was the same.

18. There could not be any thing morally unclean in what was the ordinance of God; but this purification might have various uses notwithstanding.

24. If a man did this unknowingly, he was subject to this inconvenience. If it was done knowingly, both the parties were to be cut off from their people. This practice is universally held in abhorrence, and thought to be the cause of various diseases. But this case may be that of a man only lying in the same bed with her.

21. We see here that this attention to purity respected the presence of God with them; and it would tend to inspire the greatest reverence; giving them to understand that every thing that was in any sense *impure*, natural or moral, was highly offensive to God.

Ch. XVI. 1. This must have followed what is related in the tenth chapter, in which there is an account of the death of Aaron's sons; but the writer thought proper to insert in the same place various particulars relating to the subject of uncleanness, since they all rendered persons unfit to appear in the divine presence, as well as the offence of which those persons had been guilty. This chapter contains an account of the observances of the high priest on the day of atonement.

2. This cloud or symbol of the divine presence, was usually in this place, but not at all times. But whether it was visible there or not, the place was to be respected as if it had been there.

The high priest only being admitted into the holy of holies, and that only once a year, was calculated to impress

press the mind with an idea of the awfulness of the divine presence. Eastern sovereigns were only approached by certain persons, and at certain times.

4. When the highpriest was to appear in the divine presence, he did not put on his splendid garments, but others, like those of other priests; and yet not the same that he wore at other times, but appropriated to the services of this day, and therefore called *holy*. His putting off his rich garments when he went into the holy of holies, was probably in token of humiliation, it being the time for the confession of his own sins, as well as theft of the nation. On other days the high priest washed only once, at the beginning of his ministration, but on this day he washed himself five times, as often as he changed his garments, and went from one service to another. This appears in part from v. 23—24.

8. The heathens worshipped demons in the form of *goats*; and for this reason perhaps one of these animals was directed to be sacrificed on this occasion, and another to be loaded, as it were, with the sins of the people.

7 &c. The word *azazel* is probably derived from the Hebrew words viz. *ay* and *azal*, the former of which signifies a *goat*, and the latter *he goeth*, to denote the goat let loose.

This law about the goat that was sacrificed, and the scape goat, corresponds to that about the two birds that were to be brought by a person who was cleansed from his leprosy, one of which was killed, and the other let loose. Lev. xiv, 4, &c. Nothing seems to have been intended by this ceremonial but to express by an
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apt symbol the removal of sin in the one case, and of uncleanness in the other. The goat might be chosen for this purpose in opposition to the opinions of the Egyptians, with whom the goat was an object of worship, especially in the Mendesian nome, near to which the Israelites had resided.

How mild, we may observe on this occasion, was the religion of the Hebrews compared with those of many heathen nations, who often sacrificed men for the purification of their cities. When the people of Marseilles had suffered by a pestilence, they took a man, and after keeping him a year at the public expence, and feeding him with every delicacy, threw him into the sea with execrations, praying that all the evils with which they had been threatened might fall upon him. *Spencer*, p. 1066. According to Clavigiero, the Mexicans had a similar custom.

10. The scape goat is here said to *make atonement* as well as that which was sacrificed; so that the shedding of blood was not necessary to atonement. The sending this goat into the wilderness was an emblematical representation of the entire removal of the sins that had been confessed upon it.

14 This required his going into the holy of holies a second time. All the Jews suppose that the blood was not sprinkled on the ark itself, but only on the floor before it. This sprinkling was on that side of the ark which faced the holy place, and therefore looked towards the East. If the highpriest had his face towards the East, he must have got to that side of the ark which was next to the farthest wall of the holy of holies.

15 This

15. This required him to go into the holy of holies a third time.

18. This must have been the great altar that stood in the open court in the front of the holy place, and therefore it is said to be *before the Lord*.

23. These, it is said, were never to be used any more, but new ones to be provided against the next year.

24. The garments he now put on were the golden ones, and the sacrifice here mentioned was probably the daily evening sacrifice.

29. This was the only annual fast in the Hebrew ritual. All the other times on which they assembled were festivals, or seasons of rejoicing.

32. These holy garments were appropriated to this service, usually called by the Jews the *white garments*.

Ch. XVII. 4. It was wisely provided, in order to prevent superstition, and consequently idolatry, that all sacrifices should be performed in a certain place; and by persons expressly appointed for the purpose, and also in a manner particularly prescribed to them. He who transgressed this rule was considered as in the highest degree criminal. The heathens often sacrificed in their fields, with a view to procure their fruitfulness; and this custom the idolatrous Israelites adopted. *Hos. xv, 11. Their altars were as heaps in the furrows of the field.*

7. The Hebrew word denotes more particularly that species of demon, or genii, which were worshipped in
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the form of goats ; such as Pan, the Satyrs, and Fauns; To such divinities the Israelites had probably sacrificed in Egypt, and therefore they retained a strong inclination for the practice. But it may refer to any hairy animals, tho' more especially goats, which were objects of worship at Mendes in Egypt, which was near to the residence of the Israelites. This term seems to be synonymous to *shedim* in Deut. xxxii, 17, where it signifies demons, or heathen gods in general. And in the Targum of Is. xiii, 21. the former word is rendered by the latter.

10. The prohibition to eat blood in this connection seems to refer to the customs of the heathens, in eating the blood of some of their sacrifices, by way of feasting with their gods.

11. That in which life was supposed to reside was to be given back to God, as the giver of life.

15. i. e. If they had eaten of such things without being aware of it at the time. To do this willfully, and without necessity, was death. But it is taken for granted by the Jews, that in an enemy's country, or in time of famine, all kinds of food, even swine's flesh, may be eaten.

Ch. XVIII. 1. This chapter contains the laws concerning marriage, or a specification of the degrees of affinity within which marriage may not be contracted.

6. To uncover the nakedness signifies to have carnal knowledge of a woman.

7. Such marriages as these were not uncommon in Egypt, and the East ; but they were always held in abhorrence

horrence in the West ; as we see in the remorse of **Œdipus** for unknowingly marrying his mother **Jocasta**. The reason why marriages ought not to be allowed between near kindred is their necessary and frequent intercourse ; when, if they regarded one another as objects of carnal desire, the temptation to lewdness would be too great. But this connection being considered as a thing that never can take place, not even in lawful marriage, the idea is effectually precluded ; and thus they can live together without any suspicion of criminal intercourse. It is for this reason principally that a marriage with the sister of a wife deceased is improper ; because the children naturally falling under the care of a maiden aunt, it is most convenient that she should live with their father as with a brother.

10. i. e. They are descended from thyself.

18. Jacob had done this, but it was now forbidden, and he did not do it with design.

21. The phrase *passing through the fire*, properly signifies drawing them through the flame, or only over a fire, and not burning them alive. It was done as a dedication of them to their deities, especially the sun, the visible source of light and heat, and the greatest object of their worship, in order to engage their protection.

22. These horrid abominations of sodomy and bestiality were common in the heathen world, and even many modern unbelievers make very light of them. This is well known with respect to the late king of Prussia. But they who debase human nature in this shocking manner, are not worthy to live among men.

Ch. XIX. 1. This chapter contains a repetition of several precepts of particular importance, especially those relating to idolatrous practices.

2. This excellent and sublime precept must relate to moral purity, of which natural purity must have been considered as emblematical. This is a precept that could not have occurred to the heathens, whose gods were notoriously addicted to vices that most disgrace human nature.

10. The humanity inculcated in this precept has no counterpart in the laws of any heathen country. Among the Hebrews strangers were recommended to the most respectful consideration, and even wild animals, as we shall see, were to have some attention paid to them.

12. The profanation of the name of God, as distinct from falsely swearing by it, must mean the using it lightly, without due reverence.

18. These are most excellent moral precepts, the observance of which could not fail to promote the best grounded peace and harmony, as they enjoin universal love and charity, without any partiality in favour of a man's self.

19. These precepts relate to some idolatrous customs of which we have but very imperfect accounts. Maimonides says that the heathen priests of those times wore garments of linen and woollen mixed, with rings on their fingers made of some metal, as he found in their books.

The same heathens who sowed with different kinds of seed, and plowed, as a religious ceremony, with animals of different natures, might endeavour, from the same

same superstitious notions, to make them copulate. *Spencer*, p. 540. It seems to have been of the genius of this antient superstition to join things that nature had separated. It is the more probable that only such an unnatural mixture as that of the bull and the ass was intended, because mules appear to have been in common use among the antient Hebrews. David's sons rode on mules. 1 Sam. xiii, 29. He set Solomon upon his own mule at his coronation, 1 Kings, i. 33, and mules were received as tributary presents by Solomon from the neighbouring countries.

23. The trees having been planted by idolaters, and probably with superstitious ceremonies, the fruit of them being considered as unclean for a certain time, would tend to impress the minds of the Israelites with an idea of the impurity and abominable nature of idolatry, &c. The Zabians consecrated to their gods the fruits of the first three years, offering one part of them, and eating the other in their temples. It was to counteract this that the fruit of all these three years was ordered to be considered as unclean, and unfit for any use ; but the fruits of the fourth year might be eaten in the divine presence. It is obvious, however, to observe, that no nation getting possession of any country would naturally conduct themselves in this manner, so as to destroy any thing that would have been of use to them. They must have supposed themselves under the guidance and controul of a superior Being.

26. According to the LXX this is *ye shall not eat on the mountains*, which is spoken of in Ez. xviii, 6, as an

idolatrous practice, and yet not forbidden by Moses, if not in this place. It requires no great change in the Hebrew to give the passage this meaning. But something must be understood besides merely eating.

A great part of the religions of all the antient idolaters consisted in various modes of divination, with a view to pry into futurity, to avert bad, or to procure good fortune. Every thing of this kind, was therefore strictly forbidden to the Israelites. The distinction of days into fortunate and unfortunate was also universal in the heathen world. All these observances were derived from an idea of the interference of their gods in the affairs of men, signifying their will by certain signs, as the flight of birds, marks on the intestines of animals sacrificed to them, &c. and of their being well disposed towards them on some days, and the contrary on others &c. &c. All these superstitious observances necessarily occasioned much inconvenience, as well as groundless hopes and fears.

The Zabians made much use of blood in their religious rites, thinking it to be the food of the demons, and therefore most acceptable to them. Of this the offerers ate a part, and the rest they poured out into a hole dug in the ground, and round it they placed themselves in their solemn rites of worship. *Spencer, p. 377.*

The word here rendered *inchantment* properly signifies *divination by birds*, which was practised by all heathen nations. *Ib. 385.* And the word rendered *observing of times* refers to the distinction of days into lucky and unlucky, which supposed the doctrine of *two principles*

principles in nature, a good and an evil one, which prevailed in their turns, and that this alternate prevalence was indicated not only by the conjunctions and oppositions of the heavenly bodies, but by several appearances on the earth, especially the motions of animals. A great part of the poem of Hesiod on *Works and days*, consists of precepts concerning particular days proper for the several works of husbandry.

27. This is a prohibition of some idolatrous superstition. The heathens cut their hair in this form, and they also threw it into the sepulchres of their friends, as an offering to the infernal gods. For that this precept relates to the *dead* is probable from the manner in which it is repeated, Deut xiv 1, and from the verse immediately following this.

All plucking off of the hair in token of mourning could not be forbidden by this law, since we find it practised in the best times, and without any censure; but some heathen ceremony, in which the hair was not only cut off, but offered to a heathen deity, or to appease the manes of the deceased. Job cut off his hair on the death of his sons.

28. This probably refers to those marks in their flesh by which the heathens denoted their devotedness to their deities. They were impressed chiefly on the hands, and to these there is a reference in Zech. xiii, 6. Lucian says that the priests of the Syrian goddesses were marked, some on the palms of their hands, and others on their necks. These marks were sometimes made with punctures through the skin, filled with ink, or some other colouring material, so as to be afterwards indelible, and

sometimes by burning. Sometimes these marks were made on the forehead, and to this there is an allusion in Rev. xiii, 16. These marks in honour of the heathen gods were covered with plates of gold, when the persons died, and buried with them. *Spencer*, p. 417. Herodotus says that they who devoted themselves to Hercules imprinted sacred marks upon themselves. The Assyrians also had such marks.

The tearing of the flesh here referred to was more particularly done by the heathens at their funerals, to make the infernal gods propitious to the deceased. For simply tearing the hair, and even cutting the flesh, in token of grief, was customary with the Jews, as well as tearing their garments. See Jer. xvi, 6—7. xli, 5. They were symptoms of that distraction of mind which is occasioned by excessive grief.

29. This alludes to an abominable custom of the heathens, among whom the women prostituted themselves in their temples, as an act of religion. At Babylon, according to Herodotus, this was done by women of all ranks before they were married, no woman being permitted to refuse the first man that offered, and being obliged to take whatever he gave her, and to apply it to the service of the temple. This custom must have produced general lewdness. The sanctuary of the God of the Hebrews was free from every kind of pollution.

31. Some persons have the art to make their voices seem to come out of their bellies, or from any other place to which the attention of the hearer is directed. The heathen priests and priestesses practised this art;
and

and by this means gave answers to the questions that were proposed to them, as if they were inspired by some demon that was within them, and that even did not make use of their organs of speech. They who are called *wizzards*, or cunning men, were probably persons who pretended to have the power of discovering things that were lost or stolen.

The woman that Saul consulted was said to have the spirit of *Ob* mentioned in this place, and rendered a *familiar spirit*, so that it was a pretended consultation of the dead, on whatever principle, and in whatever manner, this was done.

34. In all the heathen countries strangers were subjected to many inconveniences; citizens having many privileges of which they did not partake. Such opprobrious distinctions were not allowed among the Hebrews. The Jews say that foreigners were only excluded from the Sanhedrim. To enforce this humane precept, the Israelites are reminded that they themselves were strangers in the land of Egypt.

Ch. XX. 2. The phrase *giving their children to Molech*, seems to imply more than making them *pass through the fire*; and it is certain that the practice of sacrificing children was very common among the heathens, and it probably began in this part of the world. The Tyrians, and the Carthaginians, who were descended from them, were particularly noted for it. It is said that the children were thrown into a hollow brazen image, previously made red hot; and Diodorus Siculus describes an image of Saturn among the Carthaginians, as stretching

out its arms towards the earth ; so that the children that were put into them, might roll down into a pit filled with fire just before it.

3. This seems to imply some exemplary divine judgment. Such was undoubtedly inflicted on the nation, but it does not appear from the history to have fallen on individuals. In that case the evil must have been prevented from proceeding to such a length as it did. This, however, it pleased the Divine Being, no doubt for the best reasons, to permit, as well as evils of every other kind, natural and moral.

9. A man's own blood being upon him means that he was the cause of his own death, and therefore that it was not to be revenged by any person.

15. The killing of the animal would tend to impress the minds of the spectators with a greater abhorrence of the crime. Every thing connected with the idea of it was to be removed out of the way, and with every sign of detestation.

18. To incur this penalty it must have been done knowingly, and probably in open contempt of the law. But as in v. 23, the nations of Canaan are said to have practised all the things that are here forbidden, there is room to suspect that this was done in some idolatrous rites, the knowledge of which is now lost ; for there was nothing so shocking to humanity, or decency, that was not practised in some acts of the religion of those times.

20. Some suppose that by *dying childless* was meant that their issue should not be considered as theirs, so as to be intitled to their inheritance. So Austin interpreted the passage.

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Ch. XXI. 1. This would be necessary in order to prevent their frequent incapacity for attending their necessary ministrations; and at the same time it would tend to inspire the people with the greater respect for them. In mourning persons appeared in a squalid dress, and neglected the usual modes of cleanliness, but it did not become a crime to have such persons in his presence.

5. It is evident from this that these practices in mourning were permitted to other persons, tho' not to the priests.

7. They were not to marry any person whom it was considered as disrespectful to marry, tho' lawful to other persons. By *profane* may be meant one who had been deflowered, tho' against her will, or whose character was suspected.

9. This was the greatest punishment, the effect of it being that nothing was to remain of them to pollute the earth or the air.

10. He was not to neglect to trim his hair, in whatever that consisted.

12. He must not neglect his duty in the sanctuary, tho' he should then hear of the death of a near relation.

14. Whatever tends to lower the character of a person renders him in some measure unfit to attend upon any prince, and such marriages were less respectable than others.

17. As it would have been unseemly for an earthly sovereign to be served by maimed persons, or those who laboured under any disorder that rendered them offensive, it was equally improper for the Divine Being

the sovereign of the Hebrew nation, to be served by such persons.

Ch. XXII. 2. They were not to eat of the sacrifices when they were in a state of uncleanness.

23. If any person vowed a beast for a sacrifice, it was understood to be perfect in its kind ; but tho' it was defective in some respects, if it was still proper for food, it might be presented as a gift.

27. They were supposed not to be fit for food till they were a week old, and therefore not fit to be offered in sacrifice.

28. There was much humanity in this law. Had it been otherwise, Maimonides observes that the young animal might have been killed in the sight of its dam, which would have been a great affliction to her.

Ch. XXIII. 2. The word in this place properly signifies *assemblies*, and therefore includes the day of atonement, as well as the three festivals.

10. This was of barley, which was the first of the harvest.

13. That is from the 16th of Nisan, or the second day of the feast of unleavened bread.

16. From this it was usually called *Pentecost*.

17. Being baked with leaven, they were not to be burned upon the altar, but were to be wholly eaten by the priests.

24. The seventh month was the beginning of the civil year, and for this reason, probably, it was opened by the blowing of trumpets.

29. The fast was to continue from one evening to the

the next, but it was only for a single day ; and was the only one that was enjoined the Israelites.

36. The word that is here used signifies *a concluding day*, and so the last day of the feast of unleavened bread is called. Deut. xvi, 8. This is called *the great day of the feast*. John vii, 37.

39. This eighth day was no part of the feast of tabernacles, for they did not dwell in tents on that day. It was observed on account of its being the time when the fruits of the earth were gathered in, and is therefore called (Ex. xxiii, 16) *the feast of ingathering*.

40. It appears from the Jewish ritual, and may be inferred from John vii, 37—38, that on the last day of this feast water was brought to the temple with great rejoicing, in commemoration, it is thought, of God having brought them to *a land of brooks and fountains of water*, as it is said Deut. viii, 78, as well as *a land of vines and fig-trees, &c.*

In addition to the institutions of Moses, the Jews, according to Josephus and the Rabbins, added the custom of carrying in procession branches of myrtle, willow and palm trees. With these Maimonides says they went seven times round the altar. Some of these branches they also say were wrapped in wool, and to this were hung various ornaments. It is farther said that on this occasion they carried lighted torches, and danced as they went. These rites, it is thought by Spencer, were borrowed from their heathen neighbours ; but there was nothing of idolatry in them. The Romans, and probably the heathens in general, made these processions from the left hand to the right, probably in imitation

tion of the motions of the celestial bodies. In making these solemn processions they always sung and danced. *Spencer*, p. 1131.

Ch. XXIV. 2. Tho' nothing was done in the sanctuary in the night, it was not proper that when the priests entered it in the morning they should find the place in darkness. There was nothing, therefore of superstition in this continual burning of the lamps, as in the perpetual fires of the heathens.

7. This was offered to God, but the bird was eaten by the priests.

14. To blaspheme God, that is to speak reproachfully of God, was equivalent to renouncing their religion, and therefore was of equal criminality with idolatry, the greatest crime that an Israelite could be guilty of; their nation being set apart from all others for the sole purpose of preserving in the world the knowledge and the worship of the one true God.

16. Any person residing in the country was subject to the same laws with the Israelites themselves, and their lives and property had the same protection, but they were also subject to the same penalties in case of the breach of any of them. Had idolaters, continuing such, been permitted to live in the country, the great object of all the Mosaic institutions would have been hazarded.

Ch. XXV. 2. This sabbatical year was, no doubt, made to begin in September, which was the commencement of the civil year, when the fruits of the ground were gathered in, and before the plowing and sowing for another year commenced.

7. All the spontaneous fruits of the ground were common this year, the proprietor taking them along with other persons. By *beasts of the land* were, no doubt, meant wild animals, as hares, rabbits, &c. but not beasts of prey.

8. It is supposed that the first sabbatical year was the twenty first after entering the land of Canaan ; seven years being employed in the conquest, and seven more in the division of it ; and consequently the first jubilee was the sixty fourth year. And Maimonides observes that there were seventeen jubilees from that time to the Babylonish captivity, which fell out in the thirty sixth year after a jubilee.

10. It is probable that for this purpose they blew the trumpets in some particular manner, to distinguish it from any other sounding of the same instrument. It seems pretty evident that the year of jubilee was the fiftieth, and not the forty ninth year ; and therefore that there were two years of rest for the land.

13. The Jews say that debts were remitted on the sabbatical years, and not at the jubilee ; but that at the jubilee only were slaves manumitted, and estates reverted to the original proprietors. This was an excellent provision for preserving a sufficient degree of equality of possessions, and preventing the impoverishing of families.

21. This must have been a perpetual miracle. But from what they had already experienced, they had no reason to doubt the performance of this promise. This assurance that the land should yield the produce of *three years* must refer to the case of the jubilee, which immediately

diately followed a sabbatical year. With respect to the common sabbatical years, a provision of two years was all that was wanted. This abundant supply coming before the sabbatical year, would make the people perfectly easy with respect to their subsistence the year following.

23. It was highly proper that this peculiar people should have their minds thoroughly impressed with the idea that they were more immediately dependant upon God than any other nation. They were in a peculiar sense *his people*, the land was *his*, they only had the use of it on certain prescribed terms ; and he was their supreme civil governor.

24. This was a farther provision against a very unequal distribution of property. Tho' an estate was sold till the year of jubilee, yet if the original owner, or any near relation, could in the mean time pay the price of it, they might reclaim it.

29. It was with good reason that the law respecting landed property should differ from that of houses. These are perishable, but the other not.

31. A farm house was considered as an appendage to the farm, or landed estate, and was therefore subject to the same laws.

33. The Levites having no property in land, the laws of landed property applied to their houses. It was all the permanent property they had.

36. The Israelites not being a commercial people the lending of money to each other was naturally considered as an act of brotherly kindness. But of strangers,
who

who dealt in commerce, and who derived pecuniary advantage from the loan of money, they might take interest for money lent to them.

43. How powerful was this motive to brotherly love and charity. They were alike the servants of God; and, standing in the same relation to him, they ought to be friendly to one another.

44. The Israelites were not forbidden to have slaves; but with them the lives and limbs of slaves were better protected than in any other country.

Ch. XXVI. 1. The word *מִשְׁכָּן* here rendered an *image of stone*, was probably an obelisque, such as was common in Egypt. They were erected under certain aspects of the heavenly bodies, and they were carved with emblematical figures for superstitious purposes, as guardians of the place in which they were erected. The meaning of the word is either *stones of prospect*, the deity being supposed to take his station there, and thence have his protecting eye on all the neighbourhood, or *stones of anointing*. And large and smooth stones were regarded with particular respect, and frequently anointed by superstitious heathens. Of this kind was the black stone in the Caaba at Mecca. SPENCER.

It is something remarkable that such stones were called *batyha*, as if they had been so called from *Bethel* where Jacob erected and anointed such a stone pillar, as a memorial of God's appearing to him there.

4. All antient nations considered temporal prosperity as proceeding from the favour of their gods, and adversity as caused by their displeasure. Here the Divine Being

Being assures the Israelites, that, what other nations vainly looked for from their gods, he would certainly bestow upon them, if they adhered to his worship, and obeyed his laws. Every thing that is here promised, will, no doubt, be fulfilled on the return of the Jews to their own country, when they will be thoroughly reformed by the discipline to which they will have been subjected.

14. All that is here foretold in case of disobedience has actually came to pass. No prediction was ever more exactly fulfilled.

18. Here, and in other places, *seven times* is used instead of many times.

29. This was literally done at the siege of Samaria by the Syrians, and of Jerusalem by the Romans ; and probably to a much greater extent than history has informed us of.

30. The word here rendered *images* דמני signifies *pillars in honour of the sun*. *Spencer*, p. 475. They were erected near to altars dedicated to that luminary, and served, besides, as an indication of the place where that worship was performed. This term is often used in conjunction with another (מצבת) which denotes images in general. Those called אשרי were dedicated to all the host of heaven. For this term we sometimes meet *Ashteroth* which properly signifies a *flock of sheep*, but both of them agree in suggesting the idea of *multitude*, *Ib* p. 481. But in general the term *Ashteroth* signifies a female deity by the Greeks called *As-tarte*, which was worshiped in Syria, and no doubt in Palestine.

Q. her

Others say that *Hammanim* were temples of the sun, the same also that are called *chariots of the sun*, being built with vaulted roofs. In 2 Kings xxiii, 18, it is said of Josiah that *he took away the horses that the kings of Judah had given to the sun at the entering into the house of the Lord, &c. and burned the chariots of the sun in the fire.* Horses were kept to draw those chariots of the sun, as well as to sacrifice to him by the Persians. They were introduced by Manesseh. Strabo says he saw statues of *Amanus* carried in procession. But Abenezra thinks that the horses mentioned in the scriptures were only statues in Bronze, consecrated to the sun. *Jurieu sur les dogmes*, p. 707.

40. That there will be this happy change in the disposition of the Israelites, and that all the happiness here promised them in consequence of it will actually be their lot, is most expressly and clearly foretold in many prophecies; and the present state of things is such as leads us to look forwards, with joyful expectation, to this most glorious event. That the Jews have abundantly repented of their *idolatry*, to which they were so long prone, sufficiently appeared in the time of the Maccabees, after the Babylonish captivity. But it is evident from Josephus, as well as from the gospel history, that the more opulent part of the nation were afterwards exceedingly corrupt with respect to morals in general; and their guilt in the death of Jesus, and the persecution of his followers, is equal to any thing that is laid to their charge with respect to their former prophets, and must therefore subject them to as great a punishment. Of this it cannot be said that, as a nation, they have as

yet repented, nor is there any appearance that the great body of the Jews will do this in their present dispersed state. But having met with better treatment from christians of late years, they have not the inveteracy against them that their ancestors had; and being reformed in other respects, it may be hoped that they are not improper objects of divine mercy. Their complete reformation, and their repentance of the persecution of christians, may be deferred to their final restoration. The remains of the ten tribes are probably the *Afghans*, who are now Mahometans, and that they will be converted before their restoration is extremely improbable. But a new series of miracles, which we are taught to expect in the *latter days*, may reclaim even them, and bring them into the same fold with their brethren the Jews.

Ch. XXVII. 3. If any person devoted himself to the service of God, and his personal service at the sanctuary was not wanted, he was to pay a sum of money in proportion to the value of such service. This sum was not to exceed what is here specified; and if he was not able to pay it (without, it must be understood, distressing his family) the priest had the power of reducing it as he should think reasonable.

10. This was to impress an idea of respect for whatever had been dedicated to God.

13. The priest might, through ignorance of its real value, rate it too high; and the man was not obliged to give more than he had really intended.

17. A man could not give his substance to God any more than to a man, beyond the time of jubilee. This would

would prevent the perpetual alienation of land from motives of superstition.

21. This land, however, the priests were not forbidden to sell, and it is thought by some that they were under obligation to do it to some person of the tribe to which the original proprietor had belonged; because the priests could have no permanent property in land.

Lowman supposes the meaning of the law to have been, that tho' in general lands reverted to the original proprietors at the jubilee, this remained in the possession of the priests till it was *redeemed*; so that there was what we call a mortgage upon it. Whatever the law was, we read of no complaint of the acquisition of landed property by the priests in any part of the Jewish history.

28. The term that is here made use of, is not the same with that which was used before, which simply signified a *gift*; whereas this was devoted not as a gift, but as *accursed*, and devoted to destruction. But as this could not set aside any known law of God, it could not be the cause of taking the life of any human being.

30. The tythe that was given to the Levites as a compensation for the services which they rendered to the nation, Lowman computes to have been not more than *three and an half per cent.* of the produce of the lands, above what ought to be considered as their proper estate, to which they were intitled as one of the twelve tribes. *On the civil Government of the Hebrews*, p. 326.

32. This, it is thought, alludes to the mode of taking the tythe of cattle. It is said that as the sheep went

out of the fold, a man, with a rod coloured with ochre, stood at the gate, and marked every tenth. But the phrase *passed under the rod*, may only mean all that were *numbered*, or of which an account was taken. This was done by the shepherd with respect to his sheep, as they passed under his crook, or rod, every night. There is an allusion to this in Ezekiel, where it is said Ch. xxi, 37; *I will cause you to pass under the rod*, or I will take an exact account of you, and appoint a certain proportion of you to destruction. It was only of the young of any cattle that tythe was taken.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

N U M B E R S.

THIS book has its name from the account of the *numbering* of the people contained in it. A great part of it is historical, especially relating to the events of the last part of the abode of the Israelites in the wilderness. A part of it also relates to particular laws and institutions. The want of what we should think to be a good method in the arrangement of the materials of which these books of Moses consist is one evidence, among many others, of their genuineness. Any person who had undertaken to forge books, would have had more skill in the art of composition than we find in these, the several parts of which were evidently written as particular occasions occurred, with no attention to artificial method. But the uncommonly numerous particulars of persons, places, and dates, which occur in these books, is the strongest evidence of their having been composed at the time of the events; and

of this the nation, for whose use the books were written, and whom they are far from flattering, never entertained any doubt,

Ch. I. 1. This was after they had continued a year near mount Sinai. Had this people left Egypt of their own accord, with a view to a settlement in another country, it is obvious to remark that they never would have continued so long in one place, and especially so near to Egypt; from which they would naturally expect to be attacked, in order to their being brought back to their state of servitude. They would naturally have pushed on to their intended settlement, and have endeavoured to take it while its inhabitants were unprepared to resist them. Instead of this, they spent a whole year in the neighbourhood of Egypt, and employed themselves in constructing a costly place of worship, with a great variety of implements adapted to it, and also in digesting a complete body of religious and political institutions. No other emigrating nation acted in this manner. They first secured a settlement and then made their laws, as they found they had occasion for them, and in the mean time conducted their worship as they had done before.

Instead of this the first thing the Israelites do is to change the whole form of their religion, making it as unlike as possible to any thing they had been accustomed to, or could have seen or heard of; and in framing laws fundamentally different from those of Egypt, or those of any other country. As all this must have been done by a few, it must necessarily have so much shocked the

the prejudices of the bulk of the people, as to have been absolutely impracticable without supernatural interpolation.

2. There had been a numbering of the people before the tabernacle was erected, Exod. xxx, 12, some months before this, in order to a contribution to be made for that work. This was for the more orderly disposition of their marches and encampments.

3. It is probable that they were directed to arrange themselves in ranks of fifties and hundreds, &c. by which means their numbers would be easily taken. In this manner Jesus directed the multitude that he fed by a miracle to sit down on the grass, viz. fifty in a row.

6. As this enumeration was so near to the time of the former, it is not very extraordinary that the amount should be the same. They might not, however, have been exactly so, but have been the same number of fifties.

Ch. II. 2. It is evident that every family and tribe had a particular standard, but what they were we are not informed. The later Jews say that the standard of the tribe of Judah was a lion, that of Reuben the figure of a man, that of Ephraim an ox, and that of Dan an eagle; but they produce no authority for this. It has been objected to this that the use of images was forbidden by the ten commandments. But this was only for the purpose of worship, whereas this was for a very different, and most innocent use. Besides, there were the figures of twelve oxen to support the brazen sea in the temple of Solomon, and of lions to support his throne.

As the four tribes above mentioned were stationed at the head of the great divisions of the people, on the four sides of tabernacle, and the figure of the cherubim in Ezekiel's vision was compounded of these four animals, they would fitly represent the twelve tribes. And as no better reason has been assigned for the cherubims having this particular form, I am inclined to think the account to be probable.

Ch. III. 8. The Levites did not serve in the tabernacle. That was the privilege of the priests. But they took it down, carried it, and set it up when they encamped in any new place.

13. The first born being considered as God's, on account of his having spared them when he destroyed the first born of the Egyptians, was well calculated to preserve the remembrance of that remarkable event.

17- The same account occurs before, Gen. XLVI, 11. Ex. vi. 16. The particular services of each family of the Levites being expressly appointed by the Divine Being himself would prevent the disputes that might otherwise have arisen upon the subject, some of the functions being deemed more honourable than others.

28. Houbigant observes that if we read *three hundred* instead of *six hundred*, it will make the sum of the particulars agree with the sum of the whole, v. 39; whereas at present they disagree.

39. If the particulars of all the families be added together, they will be found to be twenty-two thousand three hundred. But in this general enumeration the writer might think it sufficient to mention the thousands without

without considering the hundreds. But if we only suppose that a single letter has been dropped from a Hebrew word in v. 28, and read שׁלש for שׁלשׁ , the difficulty will vanish; for then the number of the Kohathites will be three hundred.

41. As the first born of the cattle of the Egyptians died in the same night with those of men, and the Levites were taken instead of the first born of the other tribes, to be peculiarly devoted to the service of God, or of the tabernacle; so their cattle were considered as his property, as well as their owners.

46. The number of the Levites not being equal to that of the first born of all the other tribes, the overplus were to be redeemed, because their lives were considered as forfeited, and it was an especial favour to them that they were spared. The exactness of this account was also well calculated to preserve the remembrance of this great miracle, and of the distinguishing goodness of God to the Israelites in it.

Ch. IV. 3. The LXX has twenty five years, agreeing with Ch. viii. 24.

6. This was a covering for the sole purpose of protecting it from the weather, when it was carried from place to place. The staves were never to be removed from their places, and therefore what is intended here must be to place those staves on the shoulders of those who were to carry it.

10. It was probably placed on what we call *a bier*, something that had a level surface, on which it might be carried with safety.

15. Their office was only to carry them. It was the prerogative of the priests to handle them, and place them. All this would tend to impress the idea of the greatest reverence for every thing that bore a near relation to God and his worship.

16. It is probable that he was appointed to inspect these things, or see that they were done in a proper manner.

44. The boards of the tabernacle were carried in waggons; and for this reason a greater number of these carriages were allowed them, as is particularly mentioned Ch. vii, 78.

Ch V. 1. The subject of this chapter, and of the following, we should naturally expect in the book of Leviticus; but this want of attention to natural arrangement is, as I have observed, an argument in favour of the authenticity of the books, and that they were not composed by any person skilful in the art of writing.

2. This attention to ceremonial purity would have been very unnatural in a nation removing from one settlement to another, and especially in the neighbourhood of warlike nations, whom they might expect to fall upon them. The Israelites, therefore, must have been sensible they were under the guidance of a Being capable of protecting them in those peaceable and orderly proceedings. Their attention to natural purity would lead them to respect moral purity, from the connection of the two ideas; the one being emblematical of the other.

6. There was great wisdom in the encouragement that was here given to the confession of such offences as could

could not have been discovered by any evidence. It tended to relieve the mind of a sense of guilt, and to promote an ingenuous disposition. In order to favour this, it will be observed that the fine in case of theft is much less than it would have been if the crime had not been confessed, but had been proved in a court of justice.

17. This could only be water from the laver, which being appropriated to the use of the priests, is therefore called *holy*. There had not been any consecration of it, and no superstitious use was made of it.

Nothing could be more unexceptionable than taking dust from the floor, and this in the presence of the woman and her friends. This was very unlike the case of the ordeals among the heathens, when the persons accused were required to drink things naturally pernicious, to handle hot iron, or to dip their hands into boiling water, hot oil; &c. &c. when nothing but a miracle, or some artifice, could save the innocent; whereas here nothing but a miracle could hurt the guilty. It was, therefore, an excellent method to set the mind of the husband at ease, in a case which is frequently the occasion of much distress.

18. *Water of proof.* LXX.

23. After writing the curse upon paper, he was to scrape the writing off, and putting the scrapings into the water, make her drink them.

27. The effect of this water was to appear immediately, so that the case would be soon decided, which was a great advantage, and a proof that it was no natural

ral effect of the water, but a miraculous interference of divine power, which was promised on this occasion.

If the woman denied the charge, and yet refused to drink, she could not, the Jews say, be compelled, but could only be divorced.

Ch. VI. 2. In order, probably to add to the reverence with which the Israelites were to consider the Divine Being, the more any class of persons was devoted to him, the more carefully were they to abstain from every kind of impurity, the Israelites more than strangers, the Nazarites more than other Israelites, the priests more than the Nazarites, and the high priest more than other priests.

It does not distinctly appear what were the duties to which the Nazarites devoted themselves, but as they assumed a sacred character, and were farther removed from every defilement than other persons, it may be supposed that they employed themselves in something of a religious nature, as the study of the law, and instructing others in it. Whatever was the vow by which they bound themselves, it was altogether voluntary, and for what time they thought proper. Being an act of religion, it would tend to impress the idea of the providence of God, and his attention to the affairs of men. What is here called *vinegar* was a weak kind of wine, apt to become sour. And the juice of the grape being very apt to ferment, the law might easily have been eluded, if the Nazarites had been allowed to drink it.

5. Neglecting to trim the hair was of a piece with drinking no wine. They were to abstain from all unnecessary

necessary indulgence. But there was nothing painful in the restrictions they were brought under. There was no positive mortification to which they subjected themselves, like those of the Faquirs of Indostan.

11. We have here another instance of a sin offering being enjoined where no guilt could have been contracted.

18. The hair having been considered as holy, was now cut off, and burned, not upon the altar, but in the fire which was used for dressing the peace offerings. The heathens also sometimes devoted their hair to their gods, but it was by them often hung upon trees, or in their temples, there to be preserved. They considered the hair of their children as peculiarly sacred; and at Athens a day was appointed on which the hair of their grown children was cut off, and sacrificed to Diana; and previous to this they brought a measure of wine, and offered it to Hercules. The Zabii considered every thing that was separated from the body, as the hair, the nails, and also the blood, to be impure. Hence Maimonides says that the barbers among them were reckoned to be impure, because they cut men's hair, and let them bleed. The Egyptians considered all excrementitious matter as impure, and on this account did not wear woollen garments.

24—26. It does not appear that all these three forms of blessing were used at the same time, but any of them, or any expressions of the same kind.

Ch. VII. 1. Compare this with Ch. ii, and it will appear that this must have been some time after the tabernacle was erected, and even consecrated. For the people

people must have been numbered, the encampment have been ordered, and the several tribes arranged under their proper standards.

3. These were not common waggons, but such carriages as were used by persons of condition.

Houbigant supposes it should be *waggon* of the host, or army, i. e. *baggage waggon*.

7. The Gershonites had the fewest things to carry.

9. The Kohathites carried the ark, and whatever else they had the care of, on their shoulders.

11. Each chief bringing his offering on a different day, twelve days were employed about it; and it is computed that they began to make these offerings on the eighth day of the second month.

13. These chargers and the bowls being of silver, were for the use of the altar of burnt offering. Every thing that was used within the sanctuary was of gold. The charger, that is a broad dish, or platter, was probably for receiving the flesh that was to be carried to the altar, or the fine flour for the meat offering; and the bowls were for receiving the blood, or pouring out the wine.

14. The spoons or vessels of incense, must have been for the use of the golden altar of incense.

15. As these presents were of great value, it is thought that they were a contribution from several of the more wealthy persons in each tribe, and only presented by the chief.

18. The tribe of Zabulon being under the standard of Judah, their chief presents his offering the next in order

order to him ; and in this order they proceed till we come to the tribe of Reuben, and then those who encamped under its standard.

84. This dedication was performed wholly by sacrifices ; whereas the heathens had a variety of superstitious rites in the consecration of their altars, as in the *Tauribolia* and *Criobolia*.

89. The privilege of conversing with God by an audible voice seems to have been peculiar to Moses, at least in the frequency of it. God spake in the same manner to Samuel when he was a child.

Ch. VIII. 2. The golden candlestick was on the South side of the sanctuary, and the table of shewbread on the North side.

10. This must have been done by the chiefs of the different tribes ; and from this it appears that laying the hand on the head of an animal to be sacrificed, was nothing more than the presentation of it to God.

12. Nothing is here said that implies, as some suppose, that the Levites were devoted to death, and that the sin offering and burnt offering were accepted in their stead. It was only the rite by which they were set apart for their office.

18. The tribe of Levi being considered as given to God, he gives them to the priests to assist them in their functions.

Ch. IX. 1. This took place a month before what was related in the preceding chapter. The passover having been regularly kept the preceding month, some persons who were not at that time, as they thought, duly prepared for it, had omitted to do it, and applying to Moses

ses for directions what to do in these circumstances, they were ordered to keep the passover in the second month.

2. The first directions were to observe the passover when they were come to the land of Canaan ; and without this more recent order they might have thought that it was not necessary to do it before that time.

14. That is, provided they were circumcised, and conformed in every other respect to the laws of the country.

15. The word denotes the place of the divine residence, the most holy place.

16. This was a constant miracle all the time they continued in the wilderness.

19. Maimonides supposes that they continued eighteen years in one place.

22. For *two days* the Syriac has *a week*. and this has been shewn to be the meaning of the word *days* in the Hebrew. P.

23. Their marching only by the immediate direction of God, and by a signal visible to them all, would relieve Moses from much responsibility, and prevent the murmuring of the people.

Ch. X. 2. These trumpets, Josephus says, were a cubit in length, and narrow like a pipe, but, like ours, wider at the bottom. I hope that the Egyptians made use of to call the people to their sacrifices were twisted, like rams horns. More of these trumpets must have been made afterwards. For in the time of Solomon we read (2 Chron. v. 12) of one hundred and twenty priests

priest blowing trumpets, and Josephus mentions many more. *Ant.* viii. 2.

5 It is not easy to know the difference that is here mentioned in the manner of blowing with the trumpets for different purposes; but the variety, we know, is very great.

6. The following necessary addition is preserved in the LXX. *When ye blow an alarm the third time, the camps that lie on the West side shall take their journey; then the camps that lie on the South side, &c.*

9. This being done in the observance of a divine precept, and no doubt accompanied with some act of religion, humiliation and prayer, a favourable attention is promised to them.

10. The sounding of trumpets was all the music that was directed to be used in divine worship by Moses. David added hymns, and various musical instruments. Music, however, appears to have been used for the purpose of religion before the time of David. For when Saul met a company of prophets coming from the high place and joined them, they had a psaltery, a tabret, a pipe, and a harp. 1 Sam. x, 5. The heathens generally accompanied their sacrifices with hymns, music, and dancing.

12. In this place they had continued almost a year; a thing, as I have observed, wholly unaccountable on the supposition of their having been guided by their own natural views. The wilderness of Paran was about the midway between the Red Sea and the land of Canaan. Here they continued a month, and then proceeded to Hazeroth, but still in the wilderness of Paran.

21. Nothing could have been more orderly than this method of marching and encamping, by no means that of an undisciplined company of slaves, as they are represented by unbelievers, either driven out of the country, as Diodorus Siculus and others say they were, or making their escape out of it, with a view to get their liberty, and an establishment elsewhere.

29. This was probably the son of Jethro, called the son of Raguel, tho' he might be his grandson.

31. Moses could not tell how far they were to be under the divine direction; and in some cases they might be assisted by a person who was so well acquainted with the wilderness as Hobab probably was; having always lived in the neighbourhood of it, and having perhaps traversed it in several directions.

33. The ark might be in the centre, and yet their motions be directed by it.

35. There is something peculiarly striking in the habitual piety of Moses, constantly referring himself to God, imploring his protection, and expecting nothing but from his favour.

Ch. XI. 1. They had now lived a whole year on manna. With this, as well as with their continuing so long in one place, they were, no doubt, extremely dissatisfied; having had no expectation of such difficulties. As this judgment was by fire, it was probably occasioned by a storm of thunder and lightning, which fell in all parts of the camp, for so the passage may be rendered.

4. This mixed multitude must have consisted of Egyptians and Arabs, who accompanied the Israelites with

with an expectation of bettering their condition by that means, and that very soon. They would, therefore, be most apt to complain, and promote the complaints of others. The wonderful appearances of divine protection given to the Israelites would, no doubt, impress the minds of many, and induce them to join them. On no other principle can we account for their being thus accompanied. What could these people have expected from joining a company of vagabond slaves? This is a circumstance greatly in favour of the truth of the general history.

The Israelites had, no doubt, cattle, which they might have killed, but this resource could not have continued long in the situation in which they were. Some persons are of opinion that they were forbidden to kill any of their cattle, except for the purpose of sacrificing. See Lev. xvii, 3, &c. But the meaning of that passage is, that if they *did* kill any of their cattle for that purpose, they were to do it at the sanctuary, and in the manner there prescribed.

5. They make no mention of the flesh of cattle, of which they were not wholly deprived, but only of fish, and such vegetables as they could not find in the wilderness. The word rendered *onions* is said to signify *salads* in general, or any vegetables that are commonly eaten without preparation. What is rendered melon, was probably the water melon which abounds in Egypt, and is most refreshing in all hot climates. Of the onions of Egypt Hasselquist says there are no better in any part of the universe. There, he says they are sweet, tho' in other countries strong.

7. That, is, in its form, not its colour, for that resembled *bdellium*. This word in the original signifies a kind of *pearl*, which the manna resembled in colour. The seed, therefore, was not the coriander, but some other small and white seed, which resembled a small pearl. *Un. Hist.*

8. The manna must have been a hard substance, resembling grains of corn, and not that soft substance which we now call by that name. That this was a miraculous supply of food, for so great a multitude, and for so long a time, cannot be doubted, no such thing being ever found at this day. Why, also, was a specimen of it preserved, that their posterity might see what it was on which their ancestors had fed so long, if the thing might have been procured by sending to the wilderness for it?

15. Moses appears from many circumstances in this history to have been naturally ill qualified to conduct a people so little disposed to hear reason, or to struggle with difficulties as the Israelites were. He must have been exceedingly provoked to expostulate with God in this manner. But the provocation being great, what appears to us a failure of his patience and resignation was overlooked.

16. The reason of the appointment of *seventy elders* for judges rather than any other number, may have been that besides the *twelve princes* of the tribes, there were *fifty eight heads of families*, into which the tribes were divided, as they are distinctly enumerated, Numb. xxvi. These fifty eight added to twelve make up the number seventy.

17. These men would probably hear the directions that had been given to them ; and this measure which was the same that had been suggested by Jethro, would relieve Moses from much of his trouble and embarrassment.

18. They were directed to avoid all pollution, in expectation of some particular divine interposition.

23. Moses had no idea of the nature of the relief that was prepared for them ; but his seeming despair of any sufficient relief deserved this reproof.

25. Not that Moses was deprived of what is called the spirit of God ; but the same was imparted to others, in such a manner that they felt some extraordinary impulse on their minds, prompting them probably to speak in a manner that was calculated to inspire others with a pious confidence in the circumstances in which they were. For it does not appear that they foretold any future events, which is the usual signification of the word prophecy.

26. For what reason these two persons, who, no doubt were of the seventy, did not then attend at the tabernacle, does not appear ; but they are not censured for their absence.

29. Joshua, no doubt, thought that these men took more upon them than they ought to have done ; so as to lessen the influence of Moses himself ; but it gave Moses an occasion to shew how little there was of envy or jealousy in his disposition, a striking character of a meek and unambitious mind.

31. It is thought that the word here commonly rendered *quails*, signifies locusts, quails, tho' often flying in

great numbers, yet never being so numerous as is here represented, whereas the flight of locusts will answer to this description; and they are thought to be even delicious food. But these two cubits high does not mean that all the ground round the camp was covered to this height with them, as they lay without motion, but either that they came flying so low, or that some of the heaps in which they lay were of this depth. The circumstance of their filling homers with them is much more favourable to the supposition of their being locusts than birds. Also, their spreading them abroad, with a view probably to their being dried in the sun, and thereby preserved from putrefaction, agrees much better with their being locusts than quails. On the whole, however, it is more probable that they were quails, which abound in those parts, and fly in large flocks; and there are other Hebrew words to denote locusts.

33. That is with a pestilence or plague. They had murmured presently after they had come from Egypt, and had not been punished for it, but then they had not been supplied with manna. For the quails or locusts came in the evening, and the manna was found for the first time the next morning. It was, therefore, more excusable than at this distance of time, when they had been fed with wholesome food by a constant miracle, and had so much more experience of the favour and protection of God.

Ch. XII. 1. The envy and jealousy of Aaron and Miriam, is a proof that there had been no collusion between

tween them and Moses. Had there been any thing of trick or artifice in what Moses had done, it would, no doubt, have appeared on this occasion. Besides, Aaron, as the elder brother, might naturally have claimed the pre-eminence which he now coveted; especially as he had not degraded himself by marrying a woman of another nation, which Moses had done, perhaps after the death of Zipporah who was a Midianite, tho' Bochart endeavours to prove that the Midianites were Cushites. And if the Cushites of Arabia were of the same origin with the Cushites of Ethiopia, the wife of Moses must have been black, which would have been deemed more degrading still. At this time, however, it is thought by some, that the Egyptians were black, and in other respects like the negroes at present.

2. All that had distinguished Moses was, by the confession of his brother and sister, that God had spoken by him; and as he had also spoken by Aaron, tho' not so frequently, and in other respects Aaron had the advantage of him, they were offended with him.

3. This may have been inserted by another person; but if not, there was nothing of improper boasting in the vindication of his character on this occasion, and in this manner asserting that he had never assumed any thing, or discovered any pride or arrogance in consequence of the manner in which it had pleased God to distinguish him; so that there was no just ground for the umbrage they had taken.

4. Immediately on this offence that was taken at the pre-eminence of Moses, it pleased the Divine Being to

interpose in his favour ; and it does not appear that any thing short of this could have put an end to their cavilling at him. He had no other advantage whatever, and therefore their acquiescence in the superiority which he had always possessed, and never making any objection to it afterwards, was an acknowledgment of a divine interposition, and that against their own wishes and interest.

8. At this time God was speaking to them all in this open manner, by an audible voice, in the day time ; but it does not appear that he had ever spoken to Aaron alone in this manner, nor, indeed, to any other prophet in after times. Perhaps the word *not* is to be understood in the latter of these clauses ; and then the meaning will be that he shall not see God, or have his will revealed to him in a similitude, or figure, like other prophets, but in a more intelligible manner. If the common interpretation be admitted, it will refer to what Moses was permitted to see of God on mount Sinai when he was alone ; tho' then the use of the future tense will be improper, as the transaction referred to was then past.

10. In token, probably, of the divine displeasure ; but the sudden leprosy of Miriam was a more evident sign of it, and had its proper effect upon them both ; so that they had recourse to the greater interest which they now found that Moses had with God in their favour.

11. That is, had she received a mark of anger and abhorrence from her father, she would have been so confounded

founded as not for a long time to have come into his presence ; and this was all the punishment inflicted upon her, and therefore to be deemed light.

16. This was at the foot of a mountain in the Southern part of the land of Canaan (Deut i. 20) in the fourth month of the second year after their leaving Egypt ; and from this place they would have proceeded to take possession of the country, if it had not been for this act of their rebellion.

Here the Samaritan copy has what is found in Deut. i. 20—23, and what ought to have a place here.

Ch. XIII. 2. According to the Samaritan copy the proposal to send the spies to explore the country came from the people, which argued a distrust of the divine promise ; and their subsequent conduct rather confirms this.

16. *Oshea* signifies a *prayer for deliverance* ; but *Joshua* signifies a *deliverer*, implying a full assurance of it. It is the same name with *Jesus* in Greek.

21. The wilderness of Zin was in the Southern extremity of the country, and Hamath was at the Northern boundary of it ; so that they explored the whole extent of it, going two and two together. It is evident from their being able to accomplish this without being suspected by the inhabitants, and also from the history of the two spies sent by Joshua to Jericho afterwards, that the language of the Canaanites was proper Hebrew, the same with that of the Israelites. Their having lived so long in the country would have tended to bring their language into a similarity with it, if it had been originally

ally something different. The spies were not chosen because they were better acquainted with the language of the country than the rest of the people, but on other accounts.

22. These were the grandsons of Arba, from whom Hebron was called Kirjath Arba; and Arba was the father of Anak. Zoan was Tanais, probably the seat of the Egyptian kings at this time. It was situated near one of the Eastern mouths of the Nile.

23. It was carried on a pole between two persons, not on account of its weight, but for the sake of carrying it without injury. Bunches of grapes in this country are to this day uncommonly large. The word *Eshkol* signifies a bunch of grapes.

26. It was Kadesh Barnea from which they set out, not the Kadesh mentioned Ch. xxi, 1. whither they did not come till the expiration of forty years after they had left Egypt.

30. It is evident that the report of these spies was delivered in such a manner as to discourage the people, and therefore Caleb held a different language.

32. This means that the country was unhealthy, which must have been untrue.

Ch. XIV. 4 This general consternation, which implied a distrust of the power or promise of God to give them possession of the country, after all that they had themselves been witnesses of in their departure from Egypt, and the evident tokens of the presence of God with them afterwards, is not a little extraordinary. But such a story as this is what no Israelite would have invented. It is not however, the only instance of unreasonable

sonable fear that occurs in history ; and such as frequently soon passes into the other extreme of confidence and presumption.

5. This falling on their faces, or the attitude of prostration, which is kneeling with the forehead touching the ground, must have been accompanied with humble and earnest prayer to God in the presence of the people.

9. The phrase *they are bread for us*, is a strong figure, denoting that they should conquer them with as much ease and satisfaction as they ate bread.

10. Their rage must have been very great to lead them to proceed to this extremity. But it pleased God to check it by the immediate appearance of the well known symbol of his presence, probably such a bright flame as they had seen to conduct them through the Red sea ; and from this their behaviour was instantly changed, tho' they did not hear what was said to Moses in answer to his prayer.

19. This intercession of Moses discovers an excellent character, worthy of the high relation in which he stood to this people.

21. *Ten times* means frequently.

24. Joshua, we shall see, was joined with him in this promise ; but Caleb seems to have been the most active in his endeavours to suppress this murmuring. This sentence of God must have been a fore disappointment to the great body of the people, and their impatience appears in their disregard of the threatening.

37. The immediate execution of this threatening on
ten

ten of the spies, while Caleb and Joshua were spared, must have struck a terror into all the people.

40. They might possibly think that the threatening would not be executed, and that their invading the country, shewing a disposition the reverse of that despondency, which had given so much offence, would secure the divine protection and favour, notwithstanding the warning of Moses to the contrary, which, however, they found was not without foundation.

Ch. XV. 1. As we read that the Israelites abode in Kadesh *many days* (Deut. i. 46) this communication was probably made while they were there; and as this is not the connection in which a writer, having all his materials before him would place this article (and the same may be said of many others) it affords a good argument for Moses himself having both written, and arranged, the books that are ascribed to him. A writer having his materials only from memorandums written by Moses, would have arranged them very differently. No improvement can be made with respect to the whole of the book of Genesis, and the greater part of that of Exodus, because it is probable that Moses did not begin to write till after his communications at mount Sinai, when he had the materials for all that preceded before him. After this he had no choice, and therefore wrote as the communications were made to him, and as the events took place. But the book of Deuteronomy, which was written after the forty years abode in the wilderness, is a more uniform and regular composition. Of the reasons why the divine communications were made
in

in the order in which we now find them, it is presumption in us to judge.

2. Notwithstanding the repulse the Israelites had just met with; which might have led them to despair of their ever getting possession of the land of Canaan, this direction was given on that supposition, implying no doubt with respect to the event. It relates wholly to what was to be done after their peaceable settlement in it, especially observances relating to sacrifices.

5. The heathens always joined what might be called *meat and drink offerings* with their sacrifices. Without the *mola salsa*, Pliny says no sacrifice was good. It is always a part of a sacrifice as described by Homer, and wine was poured both upon the animal before it was killed, and on the flesh as it was burning on the altar.

19. This is the first time that any directions are given about this offering.

21. This seems to have been done in every private family; and the Jews consider a woman as infamous who neglects to do it. At this day the Jews are so observant of this rite, that when they have dough enough to make a cake they do it as soon as water is put to the flour. According to the construction and practice of the modern Jews, this cake was given to the priests, tho' some throw it into the fire. It is understood by them to mean that the first portion of every lump of dough exceeding the bulk of forty eggs was to be given to the priests or Levites in order to sanctify the rest. And as the quantity is not determined, it was originally at the discretion of the
master

master or mistress of the family, till the Rabbi's assigned the twenty fourth part of that which was baked for the family, and the forty eighth of that which was designed for sale.

24 What is directed to be done by the whole congregation must be understood of the council of the nation or the chief magistrate. The case here referred to must have been a general omission of some of the rites of sacrifice, which they might fall into through inattention, or after a long interruption of the observance of their religion.

36. All kinds of work, and even the making of fire for the purpose of preparing victuals, having been expressly forbidden on the sabbath, and this order having, no doubt, been universally observed; this man was inexcusable for transgressing the law. But as the transgression might be represented as slight (for tho' the sticks were gathered, no fire had been made with them) they demurred about putting him to death. But such an example as this must have had a great effect in enforcing the observance of the precept ever after.

38. This seems to have been some ornament resembling a flower, as the Hebrew word denotes. Having been appointed for this express purpose, and being continually in view, it would serve to remind them of the whole of their duty.

Ch. XVI. The events recorded in this chapter took place in some part of the second year after the departure from Egypt, while they were at Kadesh Barnea; but this cannot be concluded with absolute certainty.

1 Now

1. *Now Korath the son of Ishar &c. won over both Dathan and Abiram the son of Eliab, and also On the son of Peleth sons of Reuben.* CONJ. K.

The writers of the Universal History observe that if the original be rendered justly, it will appear that Korah was the ringleader in this rebellion, and excited the rest to join him. For it will then be, *And Korah took men, &c.*

Korah must have been cousin german to Moses and Aaron. For Ishar his father was second son of Kohath, as Amram, the father of Moses and Aaron, was the eldest son. Standing next in relationship to these brothers, he would be the more envious of the distinguished rank that they held. Dathan and Abiram, being descended from Reuben, the eldest son of Jacob, might think themselves on that account intitled to some distinction. On was of the same tribe, but no more mention being made of him, it is probable that he withdrew himself from the others. The Kohathites and Reubenites were encamped on the same side of the tabernacle (Num. ii. 10. iii. 29) and thus had frequent opportunities of conferring together.

3. Notwithstanding all their complaints against Moses and Aaron, there does not appear to have been any suspicion of their having imposed upon them with respect to their communications from God. They were only charged with assuming a pre-eminence to which they were thought not to be intitled. The disaffected considered the whole nation as standing in the same relation to God with Moses and Aaron themselves.

4 Accordingly

4. Accordingly, Moses makes his appeal to God to decide between them. Korah was evidently the principal in this revolt, from which it is thought that he was offended at the great distinction of the family of Aaron above the rest of the Levites.

7. This was taking upon them the office of priests, who alone had the privilege of burning incense.

10. It was a great distinction in favour of the whole of the tribe of Levi, that they had more to do about the sanctuary than the other tribes. The priesthood was necessarily confined to a few, and these were appointed by God, and not by themselves.

11. Aaron did not take upon himself the office of priesthood.

14. Dathan and Abiram, who took the part of Korah, made their objections to the conduct of Moses in assuming the civil authority, as Aaron had the spiritual, and therefore they refused to obey his summons.

17. They stood together along with Korah, and his company, before the tabernacle, with their censers.

18. This fire, no doubt, issued from the altar of burnt offering.

19. This disaffection appears to have been very great, the people in general taking part with Korah.

20. As Moses and Aaron had their station near to Korah and his company, it is probable that they all equally heard the voice on this occasion; but perhaps not so distinctly as to distinguish the words.

22. Korah was considered as the person who brought the others into the conspiracy.

24. They

24. They seem to have had a place of general rendezvous for all the disaffected, called their tent or tabernacle ; and here we find Dathan, and Abiram, who refused to obey the summons of Moses. This place could not be very near to the tabernacle where Moses and Aaron stood; for Moses went from this place to the other. It was probably near the encampment of Dathan and Abiram, and therefore their families were there.

30. Moses had, no doubt, a previous intimation of what was to take place.

32. The sons of Korah had left them ; for we find, 1 Chron. xxvi. 11, that they did not die at this time. He himself, together with the two hundred and fifty, were destroyed by fire, for their censers were found upon the place.

37. *Take up the censers out of the burning, and scatter thou the fire yonder. For the censers of these sinners are sanctified by their intentions. Therefore make them into broad plates, &c. P.*

38. This would be a perpetual memorial of the event.

46. From this it is still more evident that Korah was not swallowed up with Dathan and Abiram, but perished by the fire along with the two hundred and fifty.

41. These men dying as it were in consequence of a contention with Moses and Aaron, they were considered as, in some sense, the cause of their death, which is not uncommon, when men's minds are much agitated. Thus when my house and every thing belonging to me was destroyed by a mob, some of whom were tried and

condemned for it, and the country obliged to make good the damage, many of the common people cursed me as the cause of it, and would have proceeded to violence against me at the assizes a year after, if my friends had not kept me out of the way.

46. Here we see atonement made by incense, and without blood. Whatever it was that was the means of appealing the Divine Being, was said to make atonement.

49. This umbrage at the pre-eminence of Moses and Aaron must have been very general, which shews that they were not persons chosen by the people to conduct them. They left Egypt with reluctance, under leaders chosen by God, and not by themselves ; and nothing but a series of miracles, and some very heavy judgments, could have kept them in a state of due subordination.

Ch. XVII. Tho' it should seem that sufficient evidence had been given of the destination of the tribe of Levi, and also of Aaron and his descendants to the priesthood, in the judgments that were inflicted upon those who had taken umbrage at it, it pleased God to give a farther evidence of his will in this respect, and such as was calculated to give the most complete satisfaction in all future time.

6. Besides the rod for the tribe of Levi, on which the name of Aaron was written, it is thought by some that, agreeably to the version of the vulgate, there was another rod for Aaron and his family. But as there is no mention of more rods than twelve, and the name of Aaron is expressly said to have been inscribed on that which was for the tribe of Levi, I see no reason to suppose

pose that there were any more ; and the name of Aaron being particularly directed to be inscribed on the rod for Levi, the budding of this rod would sufficiently answer both the purposes.

8. It was the rod of Aaron for the tribe of Levi, and not any separate rod for Aaron himself, that is mentioned here as having budded.

10. How long this rod was preserved does not appear. It was not in the temple of Solomon.

12. So far were the people from giving into any more rebellions, that they were apprehensive lest by means of one judgment or another, they should all be destroyed. Their language is that of grief and despair. To this no contrivance of one person, or a few, could have brought them, refractory as they had always shewn themselves to be, but the awe of divine power, to which they found themselves subject.

Ch. XVIII. The tribe of Levi being thus indisputably set apart for the service of the sanctuary, and the family of Aaron for the priesthood, they are now particularly informed of their duty, and their privileges, in a repetition of what had been directed before.

16. This reservation of the first born of man and of beast to be disposed of as the Divine Being should direct, would serve, as I have said before, as a perpetual memorial of the wonderful manner in which they were delivered from their servitude in Egypt.

19. A *covenant of salt* signifies a solemn and perpetual covenant, such as was usually made by persons who ate at the same table, and partook of the same salt.

21. The proportion of the land of Canaan occupied by the tribe of Levi could not, Mr. Lowman computes, have been more than an hundredth part of the whole. *On the Civil Government of the Hebrews*, p. 109.

24. Not that the tythes were actually *heaved* in the sanctuary, but they were to be considered as *sanctified* as if they had been treated in that manner.

26. To preserve the idea of the particular claims of the Divine Being to the tenth of the produce of the land (which tenth he had given to the tribe of Levi) it is farther appointed that a tenth of this should be reserved for his more especial use; and this was given to the priests, who more immediately ministered to him. It does not appear that the highpriest himself had any particular advantage in this respect. But the Jews say that whereas the other priests ministered by lot, so that the advantages which they derived from the sacrifices were limited, the highpriest ministered whenever he thought proper, and received a proportional advantage from it. This, however, would be invidious, as he must by this means deprive some other priest of his proper perquisite.

Ch. XIX. The people appearing to be apprehensive of great danger from a near approach to the sanctuary, directions are here given to make a water of purification, on the application of which after unavoidable impurity, they might always approach without fear. Mention was made of this water Ch. viii, 7, but this is the only place in which we find directions for the preparation of it.

2. *Red without a spot* is supposed to mean perfectly red, without the mixture of any other colour.

The heathens on some occasions laid great stress on the colour of the animals they sacrificed, but this was never regarded in the institutions of Moses; but only in the case of this *red heifer*, which was probably designed to counteract some heathen superstition. The Egyptians sacrificed red oxen; but this red cow was not sacrificed, but devoted to a very different use, so that it was far from being an imitation of any Egyptian custom. When the Egyptians sacrificed red animals, they scattered the ashes in the air.

A heifer might be chosen for this purpose in order to counteract the veneration which the Egyptians and other antient heathen nations had for cows. They were sacred to Isis. Here it was treated as unclean till it was purified by fire. A young heifer, and not a cow, was sacrificed by the heathens to the moon. That it should not have been used to the yoke was in common with most animals destined to religious uses in the Hebrew ritual, which were young bullocks, lambs, kids, or young turtles.

The heifer was to be burned in the presence of the highpriest, perhaps because the ashes were designed for the use of the nation in general which he represented. The burning was made at a distance from the sanctuary, because the animal was considered as impure, but the blood was to be sprinkled towards it. It was to be killed in a valley, and a desert uncultivated place, such as were commonly supposed to be haunted with evil spirits.

Perhaps such a place might be chosen for this purpose in order to counteract that superstition.

The ashes, the hyssop, the scarlet wool, and the clear water, all bore some relation to *cleansing*, and therefore were emblematical of purification. This virtue is by all the antients ascribed to hyssop. Besides as it consisted of small leaves, it was proper to retain a quantity of the liquor in which it was immersed for the purpose of sprinkling. A handful of wool might be used to wipe any thing with, and the red, or purple colour, being costly, would make it more respected. *Spencer*, p. 499. The same instrument, viz. a bunch of hyssop tied with a red woollen thread to a stick of cedar was also used in the ceremony of cleansing a leper. *Lev. xiv, 4.*

The idea of the impurity of the red heifer was in common with that of any animal sacrificed as a sin offering; the sin of the person for whom it was offered being as it were transferred to it, as water becomes dirty by washing away the impurities of the body. *Perphyry* says that the heathens abstained from touching any animal that was destined to appease a deity. *Ibid*, p. 503.

But it seems to be in vain that we now inquire into the reasons of this part of the Hebrew ritual, tho' we cannot doubt but that there was a good reason for every part of it. It is not easy to say why the ashes from the altar of burnt offering might not have answered the same purpose.

9. It is not said how much water was to be put to these ashes, but it must have been almost without measure; since it seems to have sufficed for the whole nation

nation, and even for several generations. The Jews say that a red heifer was killed only nine times while their state continued.

Ashes were used in the purifications of the heathens, and the alkaline salt in ashes, which renders the lie useful for washing garments, would suggest the idea of this emblematical use of them; but they added many superstitious rites in their ceremonies respecting them. The water was generally taken from some sacred fountain, sometimes a burning torch from the altar was quenched in it, and various things, as sulphur, spittle, &c. mixed with it.

12. It is said that these ashes were kept in every city of the country. For persons could not have gone to any great distance every third day after contracting casual impurity. Also any clean person might sprinkle it, a priest not being necessary for this purpose. See v. 18. This water seems to have been used for no purification but that which was contracted by the touch of a dead person; but this must have been very frequent.

Ch. XX. 1. Here we have a great chasm in the history. Probably there was nothing of consequence to be recited in it, the time having been spent in an uniform manner in various removals, till almost all that had come out of Egypt above the age of twenty years were dead, as a punishment for their incredulity and obstinacy. The Kadesh here mentioned was not Kadesh Barner, at the South Western part of Canaan, but another place to the East. Miriam was considerably older than Moses or Aaron, being near one hundred and thirty

years old. She died four months before Aaron, and eleven before Moses.

2. While they kept in the vallies, in travelling through this wilderness they might always be sufficiently near to the waters which flowed from the rock of Rephidim; but being now at a great distance from it; and on much higher ground, their patience was again tried with a deficiency of water; and this generation appears to have been as much disposed to complain as their fathers had been.

9. This rod, which had been the instrument in working so many miracles, had probably been laid up in the sanctuary, and not used for common purposes.

10. *Can we fetch you water out of this rock?* implying unbelief, with which he is charged v. 12. K.

12. The fault of Moses seems to have been in the first place his anger and impatience, not performing the miracle in a calm and dignified manner, as became the prophet of God. It is also called *unbelief*; and perhaps not seeing the water flow at the first stroke he gave to the rock, he might think it would not flow at all; and give some intimation of his distrust. But the narrative is so short, and probably imperfect, that the circumstances in which his fault principally consisted do not sufficiently appear.

13. He did himself honour by removing the objections that had been made to his manner of treating them; in this exertion of his power.

16. This *angel* was evidently no other than the Supreme Being himself, manifesting his presence by means of

of a luminous cloud. No other intelligent being had been introduced.

22. This mount Hor might have had its name from the Horites, who inhabited the country before it was possessed by the Edomites. In Deut. x, 6, it is called *Mosera*.

26. He seems to have been in perfect health at the time of his death. But it does not therefore follow that there was any thing in it beyond the course of nature. Many very old persons find their vital powers fail quite suddenly, without any previous pain or sickness, and with considerable remains of muscular strength.

Ch. XXI. 2. The purport of the vow was, that they would not appropriate any part of the spoil to their own use, but intirely destroy it, as a whole burnt offering to God.

3. This vow was accomplished by Joshua. Ch. xii, 14.

4. The country of the Edomites extended to Ezion-gaber on the Red sea, at least at the time of David's conquest of it.

5. This long march about the land of Edom exhausted their patience ; and now their murmuring respected the Divine Being himself, as well as Moses ; and for this they are made to suffer, as for their former rebellions.

6. These serpents might be called *fery* from the violent inflammation occasioned by their bite. They were probably the *cerastes*, which are common in hot sandy countries.

8. This relief was evidently miraculous, for their merely looking towards any thing could not have avail-

ed them: A superstitious use having been made of this brazen serpent, Hezekiah ordered it to be melted, calling it *a piece of brass*. 2 Kings xviii. 4.

14. *What he did in Suph*, a place near the river Arnon. K.

This must have been an historical poem which is not now extant, celebrating the victory of the Amorites over the Moabites, who were not at this time in possession of the country. The proper rendering of it is very uncertain, tho' the general meaning is pretty obvious, denoting the joy of an army, after suffering from thirst, on finding water.

16. Here they were directed to dig wells, there being no occasion to produce water by any miracle.

18. This was part of a song which the Israelites sung on this joyful occasion. The water was in such plenty, that it sprung up when they only thrust their staves into the ground.

22. From this it appears that no violence would have been offered to these Amorites, if they had not resisted in a hostile manner; and as these Amorites were idolaters, whose country was promised to Abraham, they were all to be destroyed men, women and children, as we find Deut. ii. 33—34. It is probable, therefore, that if the inhabitants of the other devoted countries had not opposed the Israelites, but had renounced their idolatry, they also would have been spared; the destruction to which they were devoted having respect to their obstinacy, which was foreseen by the Divine Being, as well as that of Pharaoh, without his having been the proper cause

cause of it, any more than of other events which take place in the common course of nature.

26. It might not have been this Sihon who conquered the Moabites, but probably another king of the same name.

Who had formerly fought against the king of Moab.

A. V.

27. This is part of another historical poem, composed not as Dr. Geddes thinks, by the Israelites, on their conquest of this country, inviting the people to repair and strengthen these cities; but on the conquest of this part of the country of Moab by the Amorites before the time of Moses.

28. Ar, however, tho' conquered at this time was recovered. It still belonged to the Moabites. Deut. ii. 9—18—29.

29. Chemosh was the deity of the Moabites. Gen. xlvii, 7—13. 1 Kings xi. 7. Jud. xi, 24. It was probably the same with the sun.

35. There were sixty walled cities, besides smaller towns, in the country of Bashan. Deut. 3, 41. Josh. xiii, 30.

Ch. XXII. 1. This was probably in the seventh month of the fortieth year. These were called the *plains of Moab*, because this part of the country had been in the possession of the Moabites, tho' it had been taken from them by the Amorites.

3. The Moabites must have rendered themselves very famous before this time. For Moses, in his song composed after the passage through the Red sea, says (Ex. xv. 11) *The mighty men of Moab, trembling shall*
seize

seize upon them. This was now verified, but it is possible that at that time they had not been dispossessed of this part of the country.

4. The Midianites were situated next to the Moabites, but not the nation to which Jethro belonged; tho' it is probable that both the people of this name were descended from Abraham.

5. *River of the land of Ammon.* SAM. MSS.

Balaam must have been very famous for his prophecies, or divinations; and from what appears, his communications were from the Supreme Being, tho' it is possible he might have had recourse to such methods as were then practised in order to procure an insight into futurity, and to procure good or evil to nations or individuals. If that was the case, he was at that time overruled. Living as he did in Mesopotamia, his fame must have been very great to induce these princes to send for him.

The terms of this message imply that he lived at a great distance, and therefore might not have heard of the arrival of the Israelites.

6. Both the blessings and the curses of persons of eminence were thought in early times to have great effect. Thus Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and in all ages the curses of parents were reckoned to be dreadful. But the curses of persons in a sacred character, as that of priests, or prophets, who used particular ceremonies in pronouncing their curses, were thought to have a more certain effect. Thus when Crassus the Roman general entered upon his expedition against the Parthians, Ateius the tribune, made a fire at that gate of Rome out of which

which he marched, and offering certain sacrifices, pronounced horrid imprecations against him ; and this was thought by many to have had great influence in defeating that expedition.

7. This carrying Balaam a present does not imply a design to corrupt him. In the East it is deemed a necessary mark of respect, and never omitted on a visit to any person of note.

8. If these were really the words of Balaam, which there is no apparent reason to doubt, he must have been a prophet of Jehovah, the true God ; and his being of this distant country is no objection to it, nor indeed his being an idolater. He may have been descended from Nahor, for he was settled in Mesopotamia, here called *Aram*, perhaps Padan Aram. Laban had a communication with God tho' he was an idolater, making use of teraphims, and he spake of the god of Nahor as different from that of Abraham. God also spake to Abimelech and to Pharaoh in the time of Abraham. It is not improbable but that other persons may have had communications with God in this early age of the world; and this will easily account for their never having been thought incredible; but, on the contrary, having been the belief of all nations. It was even generally thought that superior beings have sometimes appeared in the form of men.

15. As the answer was reported to Balak, he could not know that God had spoken to Balaam, and had forbidden him to curse the Israelites. There was, therefore, nothing to be blamed in his sending to him again.

19. As God had spoken to him when the former messengers came, he might naturally expect another communication on this similar occasion.

22. It does not appear from any thing in the text why God should be angry with Balaam. The story must, therefore, be imperfect; and in the Arabic version it is added, that *he went with a covetous design*. This was also the idea of the apostle Peter, who says (2Pet. ii, 15) that *he loved the wages of unrighteousness*.

27. There does not appear to have been any thing unnatural, or improper, in this conduct of Balaam, who did not see what the ass saw. But supposing the ass to have had understanding, as well as speech, which is very probable, what she said was very natural, as she did not know but that Balaam saw the angel as well as she.

29. This is the most improbable circumstance in the whole story, viz. that Balaam should not appear to be astonished at his ass's speaking to him. Some, therefore, suppose that this passed in a dream, in which the most extraordinary things take place without exciting any surprize. It is possible, that Balaam might have been so far overcome with rage, as to pay no attention to the mere speaking of the ass, but only to what she said to him. As his answer, however, was sufficiently rational, this account does not seem probable. He was not deprived of the use of his reason by his passion. As neither Moses nor any Israelite was present at this transaction, but the account of it must have come from Balaam himself, it may have been reported with much variation, for which the writer of this book was not answerable.

36. This respect shewn to Balaam by the king of Moab is very extraordinary, and shews how highly his blessings were valued, and his curses dreaded.

41. The deity of the Moabites was called *Chemosh*, but in all these countries *Baal* was a general appellation for their principal God, and signified the sun, by whatever other name it might be designated. Balak made choice of an elevated situation, both because such places were chiefly used for the purpose of sacrificing to the celestial gods, and because from such a place Balaam could have a more distinct view of the camp of the Israelites, which was thought to be a circumstance of some importance with respect to the efficacy of his denunciations against them.

Ch XXIII. 1. There was certainly superstition in the direction to build seven altars, and probably it had some allusion to the sun and the six planets.

3. One of these sacrifices was properly that of Balak himself, and the others those of other princes, each taking his station near to his own. They were burnt offerings, which were deemed to be of more efficacy than any others; being wholly given to God, and consumed on the altar.

4. Whether God appeared by any symbol of his presence to Balaam, or only spake to him; also whether he was in a trance, or awake, is not said.

7. These concise oracular sentences being delivered in the presence of many persons, and being of a very remarkable nature, might be easily committed to memory, and reported with sufficient exactness.

9 They

9. They differed from all other nations in their religion and laws.

10. *Let my posterity be like his.* HENLEY.

This prediction seems to refer to those glorious times promised to the posterity of Abraham which are yet to come.

13. The heathens imagined that names and places had much influence with respect to their gods, so that what they would not do in one place, or by one mode of address, they might by another. They were, therefore very circumstantial in the enumeration of all the names and titles of the gods to whom they addressed themselves. Balak might think that the view of the whole camp of Israel had had an unfavourable effect with respect to his prediction. He now, therefore, placed him in a situation in which he could see only part of it.

19. This was a proper reproof to Balak, for expecting that God would give a different answer from that which he had given before.

21. That is, not such wickedness as would finally induce the deity to change his purpose of making them a great nation. The *shout of a king* means, no doubt, the rejoicing of kings returning from war victorious.

22. Probably the rhinoceros. P.

23. It is evident from this, that Balak had formed great expectations from the effect of the particular ceremonies, and forms of words, that Balaam would use. The meaning of the last clause is that on all occasions it will be said with respect to Israel *what has God wrought*, how wonderful has been his providence with respect to that nation.

25. Balak

25. Balak, no doubt, thought that his blessings would have an effect as well as his curses; and therefore he desired him to say nothing at all rather than proceed in blessing them.

26. This was probably the highest eminence in the country, and from this mountain Baal may have had the appellation of *Baal Peor*; as for a similar reason Jupiter was called *Olympius*; having been particularly worshipped on those mountains, and supposed to be particularly present there.

Ch. XXIV. 1. It is evident from this that when Balaam retired, it was to perform some rites of worship, calculated, as was thought, to procure divine communications, and with a desire, no doubt, to oblige the king as far as he could.

2. This seems to have been delivered by divine inspiration, without his having used any means to procure it.

4. At what time he had this trance does not appear, perhaps every time that he retired to use divination.

6. These trees, planted in a regular manner, have a beautiful appearance. The LXX and other ancient versions render this word *tents*.

7. *Waters shall flow from their branches.* GR.

There shalt be a great king, who shall be anointed of his children, and shall have dominion over many people.

CHALD. LXX.

The diffusion of water is here made use of as an emblem of the extent to which the Israelitish nation would spread itself. The Amalekites must have been a powerful

erful nation at this time, and *Agag* seems to have been a name, or title, common to all their kings, as Pharaoh was to those of Egypt.

9. *Remaineth of Ar*, the capital of Moab. CONJ. C.

10. This has the appearance of a voluntary benediction, and therefore Balak was the more offended at him; as having thwarted him in the view with which he had sent for him.

15. He must have felt himself particularly inspired to deliver what follows, and before the preceding address to the king, as it is evident that he was apprized of the purport of it.

17. This prophecy relates to a very distant period, probably the very last state of the nation. A *star* may denote some distinguished prince who would subdue the Moabites, and as it is usual in the poetical language of scripture to repeat the same thing in different words, it is probable that by the *children of Seth* in this place may be meant the same with the Moabites, some city of the country, or some distinguished prince of it, having borne that name, and having given it to the nation. What is here foretold was effected by David. But as Balaam refers to a period far posterior to that of David, it may signify the Messiah, or that prince of the house of David who will reign over the Israelites after their restoration.

18. The Edomites were conquered by David. But a victory over Edomites, or some people bearing that name, is the subject of several of the prophecies of Isaiah, as to be accomplished in the *latter days*, after the restoration of the Jews.

20 This

20. This was accomplished by Saul. The Amalekites being here called *the first of the nations*, may be meant the first that made war on the Israelites, and therefore they were devoted to destruction. But it is more probable that the meaning was that they were among the first who were formed into a nation; and this agrees with other accounts of this people. We read 1 Sam. xxvii. 8, *That David invaded the Geshurites, the Gerizites, and the Amalekites. For these nations were of old the inhabitants of the land, as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt.* They are also mentioned in the account of the war of Chedorlaomer, Gen. xiv. 7. The Arabian writers say that they were descended from Amalak, the son of Ham, and the grandson of Noah. They also say that they once conquered Egypt. Perhaps they were the shepherds who were once masters of that country.

21. These Kenites were probably some Midianites who lived among the Amalekites. See 1 Sam. xv. 16; and they were perhaps carried captive by the Assyrians when they conquered the Syrians, and other nations in those parts, 2 Kings, xvi. 9; xix. 12—13. Some Kenites are mentioned among the Jews who returned from the Babylonish captivity. 1 Chron. ii. 55.

22. *By the coast of the Assyrians.* CONJ. HO.

23. This shews that this prediction relates to a very distant period, and especially what follows.

24. *He shall bring them from the coast.* SAM.

By Chittim were meant any countries that bordered on the Mediterranean sea, including both Greece and Italy. And a great part of Asia including Assyria, and

all the neighbouring countries, was conquered both by the Macedonians and the Romans, the latter of whom are probably intended in this place. By *Eber*, in this connection, was probably meant the same with *Ashur*, and Nineveh the metropolis of Assyria was situated to the East of the Euphrates, which is the proper signification of *Eber*, and the *Hebrews*. If the Hebrew nation be understood, they also were conquered by the Romans, and the heaviest calamities were inflicted upon them by that people. But of the people who conquered them, viz. the Chittim, or the Romans, it is here predicted that they are to be destroyed when the Hebrew nation will finally triumph and outshine every other.

Ch. XXV. 1. This was the last place of the residence of the Israelites to the East of Jordan. The place is called *Abel Shittim*, Ch. xxxiii, 49.

3. It appears from Ch. xxxi, 16, that by the advice of Balaam the religious festivals of the Midianites were made use of to intice the Israelites to join in their idolatrous worship; and the most open lewdness was practised in many of the rites of the heathen religion, especially in the East. In many of their temples prostitutes were publicly kept, and the money that was given them made a part of the revenues of the place. To this custom there are several allusions in the scriptures. The phrase *joining themselves to Baal Peor*, implies at least a ready compliance with the rites of this foreign religion, with respect to a considerable number of the Israelites; and after what they had themselves seen in proof of the great superiority of their God to those of the Egyptians,
and

and the strict prohibition of all the rites of idolatrous worship, this is certainly very extraordinary, and a proof that there must have been something very fascinating in the rites of this worship. Since, however, it by no means appears that they had any doubt of the facts on which the truth of their own religion was founded, they must have flattered themselves that, notwithstanding the prohibition of idolatrous worship, this offence was not very great, or would be forgiven. Excuses are too easily found for the violation of the most acknowledged duties, when the temptation to transgress is very strong. This we see every day.

The psalmist, alluding to this part of the history says Ps. cvi, 28, *They worshipped Baal Peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead.* But this phrase is commonly used to denote the heathen gods in general, who are always spoken of as without life, or power. For at this time they were universally the sun, the heavenly bodies, and other inanimate parts of nature; and therefore the true God is frequently styled, in direct opposition to them, the living as well as the true God.

4. *And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto all the heads of the people, and let them slay the men that were joined unto Baal Peor, and hang them up before the Lord, that the fierce anger of the Lord may be turned away from Israel.* Thus the passage is by Dr. Kennicot cleared from much obscurity, by taking some words from the Samaritan, and others from the Hebrew copy.

The writers of the Universal History understand by this that God commanded Moses to erect a court of

judicature, consisting of the heads of all the families, to try and hang all who had been guilty of this idolatry and rebellion. Indeed it cannot well be supposed that all the heads of the people were guilty of these idolatrous practices ; or that if they were, persons could be found to apprehend them. It is, therefore, more probable that Moses was directed to take the assistance of the heads of the people, in order to apprehend those who were guilty, and to put them to death by hanging them, and in this conspicuous place.

5. That is, see to the execution of the guilty in your respective districts.

6. This was certainly a most impudent transaction, especially as many persons were publicly lamenting their crime, and in tears on that account.

8. Zimri, the man who was guilty, and the woman also, being both persons of rank, v. 17, Phinehas, who was next to Aaron himself, thought proper to execute the sentence of Moses with his own hands. It seems that a pestilential disease was miraculously inflicted on account of this offence. Paul says 1 Lev. x, 8) that *twenty three thousand died* ; but this might be a mistake from quoting by memory, or there may be some mistake in one or other of the copies.

13. For some time, however, the highpriesthood was in the family of Ithamar. For Eli was of it, but it reverted to that of Phinehas in the time of Solomon, and in that family it continued as long as the nation subsisted. We see here also, that atonement might be made without sacrifice.

17. On account of this seduction, the Moabites and Ammonites were excluded from the privileges of Israelites till the tenth generation. For it appears from Deut. xxiii, 3—4, that the Ammonites joined the Moabites on this occasion.

Ch. XXVI. 2. They had been numbered twice before, the first time immediately after leaving Egypt, and again in the second month of the second year.

10. *Together with Korah* is not in the Samaritan copy, and according to the same copy Korah perished by fire with the Levites; and the Psalmist only mentions Dathan and Abiram as swallowed up with the Reubenites.

51. The whole number was only one thousand eight hundred and twenty fewer than they were thirty eight years before, notwithstanding the destruction of many of them by divine judgments, and the natural death of all that came out of Egypt above the age of twenty years, except Caleb and Joshua.

Ch. XXVII. 1. A direction having just been given to divide the land of Canaan among the *men*, and nothing having been said with respect to *women*, these daughters of Zelophehad, who had no brother, naturally inquired what was to be done in their case.

3. He had no concern in any particular rebellion, or offensive conduct, so as to have forfeited his title to a share of the land.

8. This only respected estates in land. Moveables might always be disposed of at the pleasure of the owner.

12. Abarim was a long tract of mountains, one part of which was called Nebo, and the highest eminence in this was Pisgah.

21. The priests only had access to the oracle, but it was in the presence of the magistrate. It is called *the judgment*, or sentence, *of Urim*, because the highpriest was then clothed in his richest vestments, one of which was the ephod with the breast plate of precious stones, called the *urim and thummim*. The Jews say that no private person could consult the oracle. But David did so before he was king. In this respect Moses was distinguished from all other prophets, or magistrates, that God spake to him without the intervention of the highpriest; tho' Samuel had this honour when he was a child.

The oracle among the Hebrews was calculated for great political questions only, whereas the heathen oracles were consulted by private persons for their personal occasions.

The principal judge in Egypt had a golden figure suspended by a golden chain from his neck. It was designed to represent *truth*, and it is remarkable that the LXX translate the word *thummim* by ἀληθεια, *truth*, as if they had thought it to be a figure of a similar kind.

It is remarkable that we have no account of God giving answers by urim and thummim after the time of David, but only by prophets.

Ch. XXVIII. The directions contained in this chapter are supposed to have been delivered in the eighth month of the last year of their abode in the wilderness.

They

They are repetitions of what had been ordered before, with the addition of some new circumstances.

2 The Jews say that there were twenty four persons chosen out of the priests, Levites, and common people, to attend the daily sacrifices, as representing the nation ; and they think they find an authority for this opinion in the first verse of this chapter.

9. The Jews say that, at the time of this additional sacrifice in the morning of the sabbath, they sung the song of Moses in Deut. xxxii, dividing it into six parts, so that in every six weeks they went through the whole, and that at the evening sacrifices they sung the song in Exod. xv, and at these times the priests blew with the trumpets more than at other times.

According to Maimonides, during every sacrifice a prayer was made for the divine blessing ; they then repeated the ten commandments, and four sections from the scriptures, the first from Exod. xiii, 3—10 ; the second v. 10—16 ; the third from Deut. vi. 4—9, which was esteemed the principal of them. *Histoire des dogmes par Jurieu*, p. 322.

Ch. XXIX. 1. This was originally the first month in the year, and on it the Jubilee commenced. The blowing of the trumpets seems to have been an invitation to rejoice at the beginning of another year, in grateful remembrance of the goodness of God through the year that was past.

13. It is remarkable that the number of bullocks to be sacrificed on each of the days of this festival should vary one every day, beginning with thirteen, and ending with seven. But by this means the whole number

was seventy, or ten times seven, a number in a manner consecrated to religion in the Hebrew ritual.

39. All the preceding directions related to the stated festivals, and other seasons of national worship, and all the sacrifices were those that were claimed by God as his right, viz. whole burnt offerings and sin offerings. Peace offerings, which were voluntary sacrifices, are not mentioned. The whole of the expence of sacrifices in the year has been estimated, by a very large allowance, to amount to be less than an hundred pounds sterling per annum for each of the twelve tribes. *Lowman on the Hebrew ritual*, p. 205

Ch. XXX. 2. Vows were always considered as solemn acts of religion. They were, therefore, not to be made rashly, but when made must be performed.

8. Women being in the power of their fathers or husbands, could not dispose of themselves, or their property, without their leave.

Ch. XXXI The transactions recorded in this chapter took place not long before the death of Moses, perhaps in the ninth month of the fortieth year from their leaving Egypt.

3. The Midianites seducing the Israelites to idolatry is here considered as a justifiable cause of war. Their joining the Moabites in hiring Balaam to curse them was a hostile action, and would, no doubt, have been followed by war, if they had been encouraged to undertake it.

6. Phinehas went with the troops, not as their commander, but to perform such offices as were required of

of the priests on such occasions. See Num. x, 9. 2 Ch. xiii, 12.

What these holy instruments were is not said. But the principal of them was probably the ephod, with the urim and thummim, for the purpose of consulting the oracle in the course of the expedition.

8. These must have been such kings as Joshua found in the land of Canaan, one to each considerable city, tho' perhaps under one head. Balaam might presume that as the Israelites had been seduced into idolatry, in consequence of his advice, and many of them had been destroyed by divine judgments on that account, the Midianites might prevail against them; and to shew his good will in the cause he had probably attended as a diviner, and to encourage the troops.

9. They put to death all the men that bore arms.

10. As the women had been the principal means of seducing the Israelites, they were more dangerous than the men, and therefore on this particular occasion they were not spared. In other wars directions are expressly given not to injure the women; but an extraordinary case was made of the seven nations in the land of Canaan, who were devoted to destruction, neither women, nor children, being spared.

18 Being young, they might be reclaimed from their idolatrous practices.

26. Half of the prey being given to those who went to the war, they would have a much larger share than the rest, and to this they were naturally intitled.

30. A greater proportion was required of those who did

did not go to the war ; and of this they could not complain, as it had cost them nothing.

35. This must have been a rich and populous country. It is something remarkable that no mention is made of camels, which now abound in that part of the country.

49. This was a very extraordinary circumstance. The Midianites must have made little or no resistance. Perhaps they had been terrified in some miraculous manner. This wonderful success would however, be a great encouragement to the Israelites in attempting the conquest of Canaan, warlike as the inhabitants were.

52. It amounted in all to five talents and an half.

53. This was of that part of the booty which each of those who fought had taken without bringing it to the common stock ; but now out of gratitude they offered a part of what they had considered as their proper perquisite.

Ch. XXXII. 1. As each tribe sent the same number of men to the war against the Midianites, the extraordinary quantity of cattle in the possession of these tribes could not have come from their share of the booty. It must have been the produce of the cattle they brought from Egypt, or what they had purchased in the wilderness ; so that there must have been grafs, or food for cattle of some other kind, in the places of their encampment.

12. Kenaz is supposed to have been the common ancestor of Othniel and Caleb. Jephunneh is called a Kenezite. Josh. xiv. 14.

38. *And they called the cities which they builded after their own names.* LXX.

This city is mentioned Jer. xlviii. 1, when it was again in the possession of the Moabites, as were at that time other parts of the country. Nebo, as well as Baal were names of heathen deities, which they were not to have in their mouths. But it appears that tho' the names of these places were now changed, they were afterwards still known by the same.

4. It does not appear that the other tribes made any objection to the settlement of these two tribes and an half in the country already conquered, so confident were they now of their obtaining possession of the country beyond Jordan, where they did not doubt but that they would all be as well provided for.

Ch. XXXIII. 1. So particular an account of all the stations of the Israelites during their residence in the wilderness as is contained in this chapter, excludes every idea from the minds of reasonable men of imposition. No person who had forged a book would have thought of such a thing or have hazarded some blunder as he must have done, in the neighbourhood of this wilderness, while every part of it was well known. At this day, when the names of most of the places are wholly obliterated, it must be impossible to form a judgment concerning them. Still however, it may be possible, when the country shall be thoroughly examined, to find traces of many of them.

4 Besides the great consternation into which the Egyptians would be thrown by the death of all their first born, the employment they would have in burying

ing them, would have prevented their pursuing the Israelites; so that they had leisure to depart with every thing belonging to them. In what manner God executed judgment on the gods of Egypt except by shewing that it was not in their power to prevent the plagues with which the country was afflicted, and the departure of the Israelites, does not appear.

8. In Exod. xv. 22. this is called the wilderness of Shur.

14. At this place was the miracle of bringing water out of the rock,

15. Here God delivered the ten commandments from mount Sinai, and many other things recorded in the book of Exodus took place.

16. In this place was the dreadful destruction of the people in consequence of their expressing a contempt of manna, and lusting for flesh meat.

35. This place is near the Red sea.

36. This wilderness of Sin was to the East of that which is called the wilderness of Sin; having spent forty years in passing from the one to the other.

42. In this place was the plague of the fiery serpents, and the erection of the brazen one.

52. All the emblems of their deities, such as the Egyptian hieroglyphics, and other sculptures, of which great use was made in the worship of the heathens, were to be effaced; and the statues and pillars were to be demolished.

56. All this came to pass. Some of the idolatrous inhabitants were left in the country, the Israelites adopted

ed their customs, for this they were driven out of it in their turn, and are not yet restored to it; tho' there can be no doubt but they will be in due time; and that time we may now hope is not very distant.

Ch. XXXIV. 1. The boundaries of the country so exactly laid down in this chapter shews how well Moses was acquainted with it, and also the perfect confidence he had with respect to the conquest of it; tho' it was then occupied by nations far more powerful than the Israelites.

5. This *river of Egypt* some think means a small river or brook between Egypt and Palestine. But it is more probably the Nile, the proper river of Egypt.

6. This includes both the country of the Philistines and Tyre, which was to the South of Sidon. There cannot be any doubt, therefore, but that the Hebrew nation, on their return from their present dispersion, will occupy the whole of this country.

7. This mount Hor was probably part of Lebanon.

8. There were two Hamaths, one called by the Greeks Antioch; called *Hamath the Great*, Am. vi, 2, and the other Epiphania. It is the latter that is intended in this place. Zedad was the northern boundary of the country in the prophecy of Ezekiel.

9. Hazar Enon was at the springs of Jordan.

11. These places are near Jordan, beyond which the land of Canaan did not go.

19. The names of these heads of the tribes are set down according to the order of their situations, after they got possession of the country, tho' it was to be divided by lot; The country to the East of Jordan was not given by lot,
nor

nor is there any mention of a divine direction for the disposal of it, tho' it cannot well be questioned but there was. Moses, who was directed what to do with respect to things of far less moment than this, would hardly determine by his own authority with respect to it.

Ch. XXXV. 2 No division of the country being allowed to the tribe of Levi, they had particular cities given them, and a limited space round them for their pasture grounds, gardens, and other conveniences.

4 There is a difference of opinion about the extent of the ground allowed to the Levites beyond the walls of their cities, some reckoning three thousand cubits from the walls, and others from the extremity of the suburbs. But the most natural construction seems to be that the measuring commenced at the walls, and that all beyond this was called *suburbs*, whether in pasture ground, gardens, or built upon, all which was at the pleasure of the owners.

8 Of these forty eight cities, six were places of refuge for persons guilty of involuntary homicide ; and considering the small extent of the whole country, six were abundantly sufficient for the purpose. No person living in any part of the country could be more than a day's journey from any of them.

21. By the law of nature they who receive the greatest injury by the death of any person, as the nearest relations, have a right to take their revenge on the murderer; and it was only, by degrees, as Lord Kaimes has shewn that this right was transferred from them to the civil magistrate. Here we find the avenger of blood, or the nearest relation, had a right to kill the murderer

murderer if he found him out of the bounds prescribed by the law.

24. In all heathen countries temples were places of refuge for the greatest criminals, but among the Israelites every case of death was tried by proper judges ; and on no pretence was a wilful murderer suffered to escape ; while the inconvenience to which involuntary homicide exposed a man, would be a lesson of caution in a case of such importance to society. This was a happy medium peculiar to the Hebrew constitution.

31. In many countries, even among the Athenians, the relations of the murdered person might compound with the murderer for a sum of money ; but this was not allowed to the Israelites.

34. This consideration must have had great weight with the pious Israelites. The creator of the world, the father of all mankind, was in a peculiar sense *their God*, and their civil governor, residing among them, and giving particular attention to their conduct. On this account the greatest purity, natural and moral (the former an emblem of the latter) was required of them.

Ch. XXXVI. 6. It was provided Ch. xxvii, 6, that daughters should inherit when there were no sons, and it is here farther provided that such heiresses should not marry out of the tribe to which they belonged, lest the inheritance should go to another tribe ; which would occasion the inconvenience of an intermixture of possessions.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

DEUTERONOMY.

THIS book had its name from its consisting in a great measure of the repetition of laws and injunctions contained in the former books. It was written in the last period of Moses's life, and addressed to a new generation, the offspring of those who had come out of Egypt, their fathers having died in the wilderness. It is the address of an aged parent to his family, the affection and earnestness with which it is written making it peculiarly interesting; and to a reader of discernment this circumstance alone is an abundant proof of its genuineness. To my feelings no writings have so much of what is called *pathos*. The exhortations of the writer are accompanied with prophetic denunciations with respect to the consequence of obeying or disregarding his injunctions; and events have abundantly verified his predictions.

Ch. I. 1. The place here called *Suph* was probably near Jordan, abounding with flags or reeds, or some thing

thing resembling them from which the Red sea had a similar appellation. For in the Hebrew it is called the *sea of Suph*. This Paran must be different from the wilderness of Paran, where the Israelites were before. All the places here mentioned were on the borders of the country of Moab.

2. The days of travelling were eleven, but much more time was spent in several of these places.

This verse should have been inserted after the 19th. WALL.

4. This place probably had its name from the goddess *Astarte* or *Ashteroth*, worshipped in it.

23. This measure of sending the spies proceeded from fear, tho' Moses, supposing it to have arisen from a better motive, did not disapprove of it.

29. What Moses said to the people on this occasion was not mentioned in the account of this transaction in the book of Numbers.

37. This anger of God against Moses was much later in the history; but the occasion of it was the murmuring of the people, which threw Moses off his guard, and led him to speak and behave improperly.

44. They pursued them in great numbers, and with much animosity, after the manner of bees.

46. They stayed in this place at least as long after this defeat as they had done before it; which shews that they had no fear of the enemy, and that these did not chuse to attack them a second time.

Ch. II. 3. Tho' this is called a mountain, in the singular number, it means a mountainous tract of country;

for such was that of the Edomites. The *many days*, in this place probably means all the thirty eight years that they had spent in the wilderness, after the return of the spies. For they must have been all that time in the neighbourhood of the Edomites.

9. Ar was the chief city in Moab.

10. The Emims were of large stature, like the Anakims.

10—11—12. These verses Dr. Kennicot supposes to have been an interpolation, as also v. 21, to 23 inclusive. They must have been written after the time of Moses.

12. At the time that this was written the Israelites were in possession of all the country beyond Jordan; and so much being conquered, Moses might very well mean the whole, as in fact theirs.

15. Their dying a natural death might be called dying *by the hand of the Lord*, as it was predicted that they would so die. Some of them, however, did die by particular judgments which were more immediately from the hand of God.

20. The reason of this change of the name, and the origin of the former name, are equally unknown.

22. This language was adapted to impress the Israelites with this great truth, that God is the sovereign disposer of all countries and kingdoms, tho' the possession of them be taken by the force or policy of man.

23. The Caphtorim were probably some of the shepherds who invaded Egypt, and were settled near Pelusium; but had left that country and settled at Gaza, being a part of the nation that were afterwards called Philistines.

26. This is called Kedemoth in Josh. xiii, 18, and some suppose it to be the same with Jeshimon in Numbers xxi, 20.

29. Tho' they did not pass through the country of the Edomites, they probably trafficked with them for provisions and other commodities, giving money for them. For tho' the Edomites in general did not permit the Israelites to pass through their country (See Num. xx, 21) the inhabitants of mount Seir in Idumea might.

30. It is evident from this, that if the Amorites beyond Jordan had allowed the Israelites to pass through their country, they would not have been molested by them. This refusal, which necessarily brought on the war, is ascribed to God, as was the obstinacy of Pharaoh, tho' arising from their natural disposition only.

34. The destruction of all the inhabitants of the land of Canaan was particularly ordered, and these people were of the same race, and had the same idolatrous customs; so that there was the same reason for their extirpation.

37. This part of the country of the Ammonites which lay near the river Jordan had been conquered by the Amorites. Of this, therefore, the Israelites took possession, but not of the mountainous part of the country, which was still held by the Ammonites.

Ch. III. 4. This country must have been uncommonly populous, the whole extent of it not being more than about twelve thousand square miles. The region of Argob was afterwards called Trachonitis, of which, together with Iturea, Philip the brother of Herod was tetrarch in the time of our Saviour.

8. The other side of Jordan respects the land of Canaan, tho' the Israelites were not then in possession of it. It would naturally have been so called by them while they were in Egypt; and they would not easily give it any other appellation, tho' at that particular time it was improper. Hermon adjoined to Lebanon, in the northern extremity of the country; and Arnon was the southern boundary on that side of Jordan.

9. It is called Sirion Ps. ccxcvi, and Shenir Ez. xxvii, 5.

11. This circumstance may have been added after the death of Moses, or this bed might, by various means of which no account can now be given, have been taken to Rabbath in the time of Moses. We cannot from the size of this bed infer the stature of the person who made use of it. It must, no doubt, have been thought extraordinary.

14. This circumstance too might have been added by Ezra, or whoever transcribed the book by authority for public use, after the time of Moses.

17. The sea of Galilee is called the sea of Cinereth, or Genesaret, which is the same word a little altered. It is the same with the sea of Tiberias in our Saviour's time.

25. Here, 'as before, a mountain means a mountainous or hilly country, which Palestine in general is.

29. Beth Peor signifies the house, or temple, of Peor, called Baal Peor, worshipped in this place.

Ch. IV. 1. This address of Moses to the people, after the preceding recapitulation of their history, is peculiarly affecting. It is that of an aged father to his children

children, proceeding from a most earnest concern for their welfare. It is altogether incompatible with any views of an impostor.

4. It seems from this, that all those who joined in the idolatrous worship of Baal Peor died of the plague with which the people were visited on that occasion; and that it affected no other persons. If this was the case, it was a most awful and instructive warning.

6. The truth of this observation will abundantly appear to any person who will take the pains to compare the institutions of Moses, contained in these books, with those of any other ancient nation, as I have endeavoured to shew in a work written expressly on this subject. Idolatry arose from the most wretched ignorance of the constitution and laws of nature, and was always accompanied with practices the most absurd and debasing to human nature. It also led to the worst of vices, and yet it cannot be said that the Israelites had any advantage for superior knowledge, nor were they ever famed for it. Nay, they are, tho' very unjustly, reproached as a barbarous uncivilized people.

11. The height to which the flame that enveloped mount Sinai ascended is not mentioned in the book of Exodus. The spectacle must, altogether, have been very awful.

12. Idolatrous nations at this time worshiped their deities under some particular form. The Israelites are, therefore, expressly cautioned on this head, and reminded that, tho' they heard the voice of God, they saw no form from which that voice proceeded.

19. The worship of dead men is not here alluded to, but only that of the heavenly bodies, and such representations of their powers as were made by the Egyptians and other nations, chiefly the figures of animals; or the animals themselves. This is also the only species of idolatry that is mentioned in the book of Job. It is probable, therefore, that the worship of dead men was not so early as the time of Moses. Some suppose that the latter clause of this verse means that tho' God forbid the Israelites to worship the heavenly bodies, he had suffered other nations to fall into that practice. And this will not imply any positive appointment, any concurrence, or approbation of their conduct, any more than a supernatural operation on the mind of Pharaoh, when his heart is said to have been hardened; but only that, without any restraint on his part, they followed their natural imaginations in adopting that worship.

20. The hottest furnaces are necessary to the smelting of iron.

26. After such frequent and earnest warnings, it is not a little extraordinary that the Israelites should ever have adopted any practices so strictly forbidden. But like many other sinners, the temptation to transgress was too strong for their conviction of their guilt. They flattered themselves with some way of escaping the threatened judgments, which not being inflicted immediately, they might think would never be inflicted at all. The history of this people shews in how wonderful a manner these solemn denunciations of divine judgments have

have been verified in every particular. The Israelites, notwithstanding all these warnings, did adopt the idolatrous practices of the neighbouring nations, and in consequence of it were expelled from their country, and are now dispersed over every part of the known world. But tho' mixed with all other nations, they are a separate people from them all.

30. It may be hoped that the time of the restoration of this people is now approaching. They have been continually looking for it, and there are many signs of its not being very distant.

34 By temptations, or trials, are meant miracles in general, synonymous to other expressions which immediately follow.

38. There could not be a clearer evidence of a divine interposition in favour of the Israelites than their emancipation from their state of bondage among the Egyptians, then a warlike and powerful nation, and their taking possession of a country occupied by other powerful nations, all exercised in the arts of war, themselves being comparatively few in number, and destitute of every natural advantage for the undertaking.

4. This mount Sion is not that which was within the precincts of Jerusalem, but perhaps the country called Sirion, which is the reading of the Syriac.

Ch. V. This address was probably made to the heads of the tribes, who were to communicate it to all the people. But being committed to writing, it could not fail to be known to them all.

15. This additional reason for the observance of the sabbath was probably from Moses, and not deliver-

ed by God from the mount, as it is not contained in the parallel passage of the book of Exodus, tho' the mark of distinction is not preserved, if it ever was properly made by the writer; who addressing himself to many who actually heard the delivery, and well knew what was written on the tables of stone, might think such distinction of his own words from those of God unnecessary.

Ch. VI. 4. A more exact rendering of this text according to some is, *The Lord is our God. The Lord is one.* Dr. Geddes has *The Lord, The Lord only is our God.*

This is justly considered as the most important precept in the whole law, and is continually repeated, and brought into view, in a great variety of ways, by the Jews to this day. It was, indeed, the great object of their separation from all other nations, to preserve in the world the doctrine of the unity of God, and the purity of his worship, amidst the universal defection from it by the rest of mankind. That any persons should imagine that this precept, as here expressed, contains any intimation of the doctrine of the trinity, is truly astonishing. But it shews such a degree of prejudice as it is in vain to oppose by argument.

7. Had these precautions been observed, the Israelites could never have departed, as they did, from their excellent institutions. At this day, they are observed even to superstition; and the effect is remarkable, as they are now removed at the greatest distance from idolatry, and every thing that bears the least resemblance to it, especially the doctrine of the trinity.

8 Those

8. These directions were perhaps not intended to be observed literally, as the Jews at this day do, but only made use of to inculcate a constant attention to the great object of their religion and laws, as much as if they had them always before their eyes. Various sentences were used by the heathens as charms against diseases and accidents, and from them the Jews might derive their custom of *phylacteries*, as the very term seems to imply. It is thought that this practice among them began after the Babylonish captivity. *Spencer* p. 1225.

13. When they were called upon to take an oath it was to be in the name of their own God, and not those of any heathen deities. Swearing was always considered as a solemn act of religion.

16. Where they murmured against him in their distress, distrusting his care of them.

Ch. VII. 1. In the time of Abraham there were ten nations in this country, but the Kenites and Kennizites are not mentioned here, and the Kephaims were chiefly in Bashan, of which they were now in possession: It is not probable that every one of those nations was singly taken, more powerful than the Israelites; but the seven together certainly were, and no doubt the Amorites alone were so.

2. I see no reason to question the truth, or the propriety, of this order; and as it was given by God, it was certainly right to obey it strictly. He who made the world, and the men that are upon it, may dispose of them as he shall judge proper; and if, as we see, he does destroy men by earthquakes, famine, diseases, and other natural means, he may do it by the sword of man.

And

And the end, of his moral government will be more effectually answered in this way, as the reasons of his conduct will more clearly appear.

25. If this conduct was actually observed, as at this time, no doubt, it was, by the Israelites, it must have been under the idea of their being absolutely commanded so to do by God himself. For they would naturally have thought that the precious metals, gold and silver, could not be the worse for having been used to adorn an Idol. But the order was, no doubt, given to impress them with the greatest abhorrence and dread of idolatry, as having contaminated even gold and silver, so as to be afterwards unfit for their use.

Ch VIII. 2. Their remaining so long in the wilderness would be a great trial of their faith and patience. And certainly if they had not been under the controul of superior power, and had intended to invade any neighbouring country, they would not have deferred it so long; but would have endeavoured to attack their enemies unprepared.

3. It seems evident from this that manna was not a natural substance, but a miraculous production for this particular occasion. The meaning of the passage is, that it is in the power of God to produce whatever nourishing substance he pleases, as well as bread-corn, the usual food of man; or even to support life and strength in some other way besides that of eating and digesting food; as in the case of Moses, who twice lived forty days without eating or drinking.

4. The meaning may be that they found no want of shoes or other necessary parts of raiment, notwithstanding

ing their being so long in the wilderness ; which had the same effect as if the same clothes had served them all the time, and their feet had not grown any larger, so as to require others. Whether there was any real miracle in the case is, at least not certain.

7. The land of Canaan was very different from that of Egypt, consisting of hills and plains ; so that its produce must have been more various.

20. Notwithstanding their being treated as God's own children, they would not be spared in case of disobedience.

Ch. IX. 1. The great number of fenced cities in this country argues its being in a state of frequent war. Consequently, the people must have been exercised in the art of war, according to the method of conducting it in those times. Walled towns were then probably almost impregnable, the art of fortification always preceding that of the methods of attacking them. During the long siege of Troy Homer makes no mention of any attempt to break, or get over, the wall. It was at last taken by stratagem, a number of men being introduced at the gate.

6. These observations were well calculated to prevent, or repress, the pride of the Israelites.

15. The flame of fire, or something that had the appearance of fire, probably continued from the time of the delivery of the law to the end of the forty days of Moses's communing with God.

20. This anger of God against Aaron is not so distinctly related in the book of Exodus.

25. This, refers to the second time of his continuing

forty days, without eating or drinking, and not a third time, as some have supposed.

Ch. X. 3. Some suppose that the ark here mentioned was a temporary one, in which the tables were to be kept till that made by Bazaleel was prepared for their reception. But his saying v. 5. that the tables were then in the ark that he had made, shews that he means the ark which by his direction Bazaleel had made.

6—9. These verses Dr. Kennicott supposes to be an interpolation, and to have a proper place after Ch.

II. 11. Here are several things omitted which are preserved in the Samaritan copy, and which remove the difficulty we otherwise find with respect to the time and place of the death of Aaron. The Samaritan copy is as follows. *Thence they journeyed and pitched their camp in Godgoda. Thence they journeyed and pitched in Jotbatha, a land of springs of water. Thence they journeyed and pitched in Abarnea. Thence they journeyed and pitched in Eziongeber. Thence they journeyed and pitched in the desert of Sin, which is. Kadesh. Thence they journeyed and pitched in mount Her, and there Aaron died &c.*

16. Here the phrase *circumcised* is for the first time used in a metaphorical sense, which was very common afterwards, signifying the cutting off every thing that was superfluous and impure.

17. This was an intimation that if they were disobedient, they would not be spared on account of the virtue of their ancestors.

18. There was great liberality in this recommendation of strangers. For tho' the Israelites had been strangers

gers in Egypt, they had been cruelly used there, and therefore might have been inclined to retaliate that usage upon Egyptians and other strangers.

Ch. XI. 7. *And know you this day, and teach these day and night unto your children.* CONJ. HO.

. This is an appeal to eye witnesses, and it could never have been received, and respected, as it has been, of the facts alluded to had not been well known to be true.

10. Tho' Egypt was watered by the Nile, much labour was necessary to conduct the water to the fields, especially those that were distant from the river, by proper canals. By the foot means the labour of digging trenches. They had also machines to raise water from the river for this purpose, and these were worked with the foot. This was not necessary in a country watered by rain.

12. The weather is very regular in Palestine during the whole year, so that the inhabitants know what to expect, and can provide accordingly.

14. The *former rain* followed the harvest, and prepared the ground for plowing, and the *latter rain* was that which came in the spring, when the corn was well grown, and contributed to swell the ear. The rain that fell in great abundance in the winter is not considered here.

20. It is pretty evident from this, that these precepts were not intended to be observed literally, but were calculated to inculcate an habitual attention to their laws. The Pharisees understood them in the most literal sense, but the Caraites not,

24. The country to the East of Palestine, extending to the Euphrates, is a barren wilderness. It is not, however, improbable but that hereafter methods will be discovered to make it fruitful. Tho' David conquered the Moabites and Ammonites, who possessed what was habitable of this country, it was never occupied by the Israelites; as, no doubt, it will be after their restoration.

29. A more particular order for this is given Ch. xxvii. 11 &c. and it was executed by Joshua, Ch. viii. 33 &c.

Ch. XII. They were not to worship the true God in groves or highplaces, or in any respect according to their own fancy; but were, for that purpose, to repair to some one place which God should appoint, and fix upon for his residence among them.

6. This was not the tythe paid to the Levites, but another, concerning which directions are given Ch. iv. 22. &c.

8. They could not in their unsettled state perform many things which they were required to do afterwards. It appears that they did not even circumcise their children, tho it should seem that this might have been done without much risk or inconvenience. But in this passage the principal reference is to a fixed place for the national worship, which they could not have in their present circumstances.

15. These animals might be eaten for food, tho they were not allowed to be sacrificed.

17. This was not the tythe paid to the Levites, but another tythe, which was exchanged for money; and this

this was taken to Jerusalem, and spent in entertaining a man's friends. Ch. xiv, 23—24. }

19. The Levites were but poorly provided for, depending for their subsistence chiefly upon the tythes, which might not always be sufficient for their maintenance, especially if not regularly paid. We therefore generally find them classed with the poor and the fatherless, who were in a destitute condition. And it appears from 1 Chron. vi, 65, that in addition to the forty eight cities, which were given to the Levites by Joshua, twenty more had been added to them.

30. It was the constant practice of the heathens to worship the gods of the country in which they resided, thinking that each of them had their respective provinces, without interfering with one another ; and each of these gods had their peculiar rites of worship, confirmed by long custom.

31. This is mentioned as the most shocking of all their enormities. And it appears from Plutarch, that when children were purchased of poor people for this purpose, the mothers were required to be present at the sacrifice ; and if they shed a tear, or shewed any sign of sorrow, they lost the price of the child, tho' it was sacrificed.

Ch. XIII. 1. It was very possible for a prediction delivered at random, or with more knowledge than was common to the bulk of the people, might be verified by events ; or that a person might be possessed of a secret, which to others would have the appearance of something miraculous. In these cases the common people were in some danger of being imposed upon. But if

the design of these pretended miracles was to draw them off from the worship of the true God, which had been confirmed by abundant and unquestionable miracles, they were reasonably required to pay no regard to them. For whatever the appearances might be, there could not be any divine interposition in favour of falsehood and impiety. God cannot contradict himself, and no real miracle (which is a departure from the usual laws and course of nature) could be wrought, but by the author of nature, or with his permission.

8. There is an apparent harshness in these orders. But, as the great object of the separation of this nation from all others, and of all their institutions, was to preserve in the world the knowledge and worship of the one true God, every regulation that was really subservient to this was proper. Besides, the Supreme Being was the proper king and governor of the Israelitish nation; so that to withdraw the people from their allegiance to him might be considered as the crime of treason, or rebellion, which in all countries is punished with death.

17. These provisions were calculated to impress the mind with the greatest dread of idolatry; and considering the great object of the divine dispensations with respect to this nation, this could not be impressed too strongly.

Ch. XIV. 1. This probably alludes to the cutting off the hair from the fore part of the head, which is said to have been practised by some heathens in honour of their gods, and especially at funerals, when they also cut themselves

themselves, with a view to appease the anger of their gods, and make them merciful to the souls of the deceased. Some nations have been lately discovered who cut off the joints of their fingers when they lose a near relation, and others draw teeth with the same view.

5. The word rendered *pygarg* is thought to be a species of *antelope*; and the word *roebuck* another species of it.

21. Persons of any nation, even heathens, might come into the country for the purpose of traffick; but they could not remain in it, or practice any idolatrous rite in it. If they renounced idolatry, tho' they did not become circumcised, they might live in the country; and to both these classes of persons, the carcases of those animals might be sold. The precept not to see the a kid in its mother's milk was mentioned twice before, viz. Exod. xxiii, 19. and xxxiv, 26. These repetitions shew that these books are no artificial composition, such as an impostor would have written.

22. It was customary in the East for the prince to receive a tenth of the fruits of the ground, for the support of his rank, and the expences of government. The same proportion was claimed by God for the maintenance of his officers and servants. Every third year another tythe was taken for the relief of the poor.

28. There is much uncertainty about this third years tythe. It may be called *tythe of feasting*, as it was to be spent in festivity and charity, two years at the place of the national worship, and the third year at home, in hospitality and charity; making the Levites, who are

generally classed with the poor, to feast with them. This is the opinion of Mr. Selden.

Ch. XV. 1 This phrase means *every seventh year*, as appears from v. 9. In this year all debts were discharged, the ground was suffered to rest from tillage, and the law was read to the people.

4. The obligation to remit debts was only in case of poverty. They who were able to pay were still under obligation to do it.

9. When the year for the remission of debts was at hand, a hard hearted person would refuse to lend, because it would be the same thing as giving.

12. He was to serve six intire years, so that the return of the seventh year for the remission of debts was nothing in his favour. They could not, however, be made to serve beyond the year of jubilee.

17. This willingness to continue in the service was to be declared before judges, Exod. xxi, 6. The Jewish doctors say that the ear of a maid servant was not bored, her declaration before a judge being sufficient.

19. The first born of males was given to the priests, those that were females were sacrificed for peace offerings, of which the owner partook.

22 Had it been sacrificed, only clean persons, or those who were free from any legal impurity, could have eaten of it. It was, no doubt, expected, that tho' they ate of it themselves, the Levites and the poor had their share, because, if it had been perfect, it must have been taken to the sanctuary.

Ch. XVI

Ch. XVI. 10. Besides the offering prescribed by the law, a free will offering was expected on the occasion, and this was wholly the priests.

16. In waiting upon any Eastern prince, no person came without a present, by way of homage and respect.

18. The judges were those who decided the cause, and the officers were those who saw to the execution of the sentence. These courts always sat at the gates of cities, which was the place of the greatest concourse, and the most public.

21. The ancient Hebrews understood this not only of living trees, but of wooden statues, or pillars, erected near any altar. *Spencer*, p. 507. The word here rendered *planted* may also signify *fixing* or *erecting*.

22. This might be a pillar, and not a figure of any particular form. For such pillars the heathens made use of in early times for the purpose of their worship.

Ch. XVII. 7. This law requiring the witness against any person to throw the first stone, would have a tendency to make them cautious in giving evidence in cases of life and death.

8. The Jews interpret this of leprosy, which is sometimes called a *stroke*, or *plague*; but it is more naturally interpreted of any wound. These causes, being brought to the place of the sanctuary, must have been decided by the highest court of judicature in the country. The priests and Levites were the best acquainted with the law; but the civil magistrate also attended, and probably decided.

14. Tho' an hereditary king was not in the original constitution of the Hebrew government, the Supreme Being himself standing to the Israelites in the relation of a sovereign, that form of government was not absolutely forbidden ; and if they preferred it, rules are here given for the choice of a king, and for his conduct in the office.

15. From this many of the Jews inferred that it was not lawful for them to submit to the government of any person who was not of their own nation. But here they are only forbidden to make choice of such a person. Their submitting to one imposed upon them is another thing.

16. It is not said that they were to have no horses, but only no extraordinary number of them. They do not in these countries use horses for draught, and the Hebrews had no cavalry in war. They had asses to ride upon, and they plowed, &c with oxen. Egypt abounding with horses, the custom of keeping horses would have led to much intercourse with that country, where the best were to be had ; and such intercourse with an idolatrous nation would have been highly improper for them.

17. A great part of the luxury, or rather of the parade, of Eastern princes, consists in the great number of women in their harems. The Hebrew princes were to shew moderation with respect to all the enjoyments of life.

18. This was an excellent provision for making the prince well acquainted with the law ; and from this it appears that there was an authentic copy of the law kept

in the sanctuary. From this, and no other, the king was to make his copy.

Ch. XVIII. 3. This allowance of the two cheeks was not mentioned before. The stomach was by the ancients considered as a great dainty; and in general all those parts of the sacrificed animals that were the portion of the priests were preferred to others.

4. The first fruits of wool were not mentioned before.

6. He might devote himself to the perpetual service of the sanctuary, and do the duty of a Levite, tho' he was not of that tribe.

8. This supposes that he sold all that he had in order to devote himself to this service.

10. *Passing through the fire* does not always signify burning alive, but only passing through, or over, a flame, without any material injury, by way of purification; thus devoting their children to the service of some heathen deities.

A great part of the religion of the heathens consisted in various modes of divination, in order to pry into futurity. Xenophon, in answering to the charge of atheism which was advanced against Socrates, mentions his frequent use of divination, as well as his sacrificing to the gods, and his arguments in proof of their existence and government.

It is not easy to fix the precise meaning of all the terms that are here mentioned. But all these arts implied a communication with heathen deities, by which their worshippers supposed that they became acquainted with their intentions, or possessed of their powers,

which they could apply as they thought proper. This shewed great ignorance of the constitution of nature. And what opportunity, as it cannot be too often repeated, had Moses, or any Hebrew, for acquiring more knowledge of this kind than other people? This is one of the strongest arguments for the divine origin of these laws.

15. To supply the place of these various modes of learning the will of superior beings, the Israelites are here promised a succession of prophets, like to Moses, to whom God would communicate his will on all necessary occasions.

20. It is evident from this, that no particular prophet was intended in the preceding promise, but a succession of prophets.

22. An insight into futurity, or the performance of a miracle, i. e. something above the power of man, is the only proper evidence of a divine interposition. If it was a prediction on which the pretended prophet rested the evidence of his mission, it must have been of an event that would take place speedily.

Ch. XIX. 9. The boundary of the country was never properly extended as far as the Euphrates, and therefore we do not read of more than three cities of refuge on that side of Jordan. Hereafter, no doubt, more will be added.

19. There seems to be equity in this punishment for false evidence. In some cases, however, it could not be inflicted literally.

21. It has been thought that if the party injured did not require this punishment, it was not inflicted.

CH. XX. 1. This must be supposed to be a case of just war.

2. The office of this priest was not to fight, but to encourage the army; and to this the sacredness of his character would give much weight. It is not, however, said, that the Levites, or the priests were exempted from serving in the army. The Jews say that one particular priest was appointed for this purpose.

3. As in all other ancient, and many modern nations, every Hebrew of a proper age to bear arms was obliged to take the field in time of war. But we nowhere read of such an attention to peculiarly interesting circumstances as in this place. There was equal wisdom in the measure. For the man who was more than commonly interested in preserving his life, would not risk it so freely as another, and consequently would not fight with the same courage.

10. There is more humanity in these laws of war than in those of any other ancient nation.

13. The slaughter was confined to the males, or those who were found in arms. Christians in general exercise more moderation than this.

16. The rules of ordinary war did not apply to the case of the Canaanites. This was God's own cause, and the Israelites were only his instruments. And the destruction to which these particular nations were devoted is expressly said not to extend beyond them.

19. They were forbidden to do any unnecessary injury to the country.

20. It appears from this, that some methods of taking fortified places were known at this time, tho' none was used at the siege of Troy, or that of Babylon, long after this time. The Chaldeans raised mounds of earth and erected towers as high as the walls.

Ch. XXI. 6. Washing was a natural emblem of purity, and was used for that purpose in the earliest ages. It entered into all the heathen purifications. Thus Pilate solemnly washed his hands in token of his being free from the guilt of the death of Jesus,

8. This ceremonial was well adapted to impress the minds of the people with an abhorrence of murder. In no other country do we read of any such institution.

11. This law was excellent for its humanity. The Israelites were not allowed to use any captive women as concubines. They could only marry them; and they were to allow them a reasonable time to accommodate themselves to their new situation.

14. Tho' she had been a captive, and of course a slave, she ceased to be one in this case.

17. This seems to be a good medium between making the eldest son the heir of the whole estate, and giving an equal portion of it among them all.

21. There seems to be much harshness in this law. But parents would not, without the greatest provocation, wish to have it put in execution upon a child, and of this provocation they were not to be the judges. There was to be a hearing of the cause before the magistrates, who being disinterested would not be disposed in this case, more than any other, to pronounce a sentence of death without just cause. In general a young
man

man thus given up to death both by his own parents, and the civil magistrate, must have been unfit for any human society.

23. This provision answered two purposes. One was to remove from the sight every thing that was unclean and offensive, as dead bodies were considered to be, and also to express a greater abhorrence of the crime, the body of the criminal being removed, as contaminating the very air. The criminal would not be considered as *accursed* on any other account than as having committed a crime which rendered him obnoxious to the displeasure of God, as well as that of man.

Ch. XXII, 1. These are rather moral precepts than laws, and they have an excellent tendency to moderate resentment, and promote benevolence and generosity.

5. This precept, besides preventing lewdness, was probably opposed to some idolatrous practices, in which men were habited like women, and women like men. There was a statue of Venus in Cyprus, (in which were many colonies of Phenicians) before which women sacrificed in the garments of men, and men in these of women. The image was in the form of a man, but it was habited like a woman, SPENCER, p. 525. In other heathen nations there was the same custom.

6. This precept both guarded against unnecessary cruelty, and the too great destruction of useful animals.

8. The roofs of houses in the East are flat, and much use is made of them, so that these battlements would prevent persons falling from them.

9. This

9. This was a superstitious and idolatrous custom practised, Maimonides says, by the Zabii. It is not probable that this precept was intended to affect the practices of common husbandry, but only to forbid some particular rite of heathenism practised in a small piece of ground appropriated to the purpose. The ancient heathens, it is said, threw into the ground at the same time barley, wheat, and also dried grapes, in order to procure the favour of the several deities which presided over these products. As the heathens were great observers of the conjunctions and oppositions of the planets, it is the more probable that they were led to this rite and others of a similar nature by some notions derived from such observations.

10. This also was probably a heathen rite similar to that of sowing different kinds of seed at the same time. For it is highly improbable that for the purpose of husbandry animals so different from each other would ever be yoked together, and be actually employed in plowing, or any other operation.

11. This precept cannot be understood universally, so as to direct the practice of domestic economy, but to prohibit some kind of habit used in heathen rites. The curious girdle worn by the high-priest consisted in part of linen, and in part of woollen. It is said that in some ancient heathen rites the priest was habited in a garment in which there was both linen and woollen and that he also wore a ring of some metal, these being the products of the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms, the deities presiding over which they hoped to make favourable to them by this means. *Spencer* p. 550.

¶12. The

12. The fashion of the garment being expressly appointed for the purpose of reminding them of their laws (as it is said Numb. xv, 38) they could never be in want of a monitor, and always in their sight.

17. Tho' such tokens of virginity are much attended to in the East to this day, yet as in this case the husband could not but know that such an evidence might be produced against him, it is probable that any other evidence as satisfactory as if this had been produced, was intended in this place.

21. This must be the case of pollution after espousals, which was considered as the same thing with adultery, the punishment of which was stoning to death; but in the daughter of a priest it was burning alive. Lev. xxi, 19.

30. It was the custom in the East for the bridegroom to spread his garment over the bride, to denote his right to her.

Ch. XXIII. 1. This law respected the priests only, and no doubt had a view to the customs of some heathens whose priests were sometimes eunuchs. This was the case with those of the Syrian goddess. In opposition to this custom, as well as for the honour of the God of Israel, no person defective in any of his members was allowed to officiate in his presence, tho' they were not excluded from any other national privilege.

Being *admitted to the congregation* must, I think, mean being admitted to all the privileges of an Israelite, including a capacity for any civil office, and the privilege of marrying Hebrew women. This was considered as the closest bond of union between two nations, as
may

may be inferred from the speech of the sons of Jacob to Shechem, Gen. xxxiv, 16. *Then we will give our daughters unto you, and we will take your daughters unto us, and we will become one people.* This law was probably made to discourage the barbarous practice of making eunuchs, which was always common in the East.

2. There is much uncertainty with respect to the meaning of the word *ממזר* in Hebrew. Some suppose it was a person whose parents were not known, or a foundling; and others that it was a person born of a woman whom it was not lawful to marry. But most probably it was intended to denote any stranger. The rule is for their exclusion in general, and after this there are particular exceptions to the general rule.

3. It could not be the intention of this law to prevent men's marrying women of other nations; for it was expressly allowed in the case of women taken captive in war. David was descended from Ruth, who was a Moabitess. Bishop Barrington suggested to Dr. Kennicott that the clause relating to *the tenth generation* was inserted in this verse by mistake, being copied from the preceding. According to Nehemiah xiii, 1, the Ammonites and Moabites were not to come into the congregation *for ever*.

6. They were not to make any friendly alliance with them, or to put confidence in them, tho' they were not allowed to invade and seize their country.

8. When they had been proselytes for three generations, but not before, they were to be considered in all respects as native Israelites.

9. In many other nations soldiers were allowed to commit many disorders on an expedition, [without being liable to punishment. - Plato allowed of the most unnatural vices in this case.

14. This was a motive to cleanliness and purity which could not but have a great effect.

15. This is understood of slaves of other nations, who fled for refuge from oppression.

17. This law is not a prohibition of prostitutes in general. For tho' whoredom was forbidden, it was no doubt practised among the Hebrews as well as other nations. Jephtha was the son of a harlot. Solomon decided between two women of this character. The thing prohibited in this place was the abominable practice of religious prostitution, which was common in the heathen worship, both men and women prostituting themselves in the precincts of the temples, and giving the hire of this prostitution to the funds of the temple. The term *זנות* here used implies this. For the word that denotes a common prostitute is different from this, viz. *זונה*.

18. A man might vow an horse, or an ass, that is the value of such an animal, estimated by the priest; but the price of a dog was too contemptible to be given in this solemn manner.

Dogs being held sacred by the Egyptians might be an additional reason why the price of one of these animals might not be received as an oblation to the God of Israel. The junction of these two prohibitions seems to imply an allusion to the rites of the goddess Isis, in which prostitution was practised, and those of the God Anubis,

his, whose image had the head of a dog; and that there was some connection between these two dieties appears from the following inscription on a column dedicated to Isis, *I am Isis, the queen of this region, instructed by Mercury. I am she who rises with the dogstar.* And in the procession in honour of Isis, the first place is given to the dog, as the symbol of Mercury. *Spencer, p. 571, &c.*

24. The Jews say that this permission was in favour of labourers in a vineyard; but it seems to be as applicable to the case of travellers, to whom it would be a great refreshment; and if they only ate, and carried nothing away with them, the loss to the proprietor could not be much.

Ch. XXIV. 2. Tho' there might be something in a woman that gave great disgust to her husband, she might be acceptable to another. Besides that a divorce was a deliberate act, given in writing, the Jews say that it must be signed by two witnesses; and that many other circumstances are necessary to make the act legal.

4. This would prevent levity in divorces. When the act was once passed it was irrevocable.

5. There is much humanity in these laws, and in many others that follow them.

9. She was excluded from the camp seven days, till it appeared that she was perfectly restored.

11. Consequently the debtor chose what pledge he would give which would be what he could best spare.

14. In many antient nations slaves were greatly oppressed, their lives rendered miserable, and short.

22. The

22 In all these precepts there is a fine spirit of humanity recommended by the most forcible considerations.

Ch. XXV. 1. Speedy punishments have the happiest effect in preventing crimes.

3. If scourging was the punishment, as shame was the greatest part of it, a moderate correction would have as much effect as one more severe. But Dr. Geddes renders the last clause *lest he should faint before your eyes*; supposing justly that the reason of this moderation was to prevent material injury to the person beaten. The shame of being beaten would be the same whether the stripes were more or fewer.

6. It was only the first born that inherited the estate of the deceased; the rest were considered as the children of the second husband.

7. It is probable from the history of Ruth, that the obligation extended to the next relation, if there were no brothers.

9. She spat upon the ground before him, not upon him. Even to spit close to another person, tho' on the ground, is an affront, Niebhur says, that an Arab will revenge if he can. The drawing off of the shoe, must have been considered as a mark of contempt, for his want of due regard to his deceased brother.

Ch. XXVI. 3. This ceremonial was well calculated to preserve upon their minds the remembrance of the goodness of God to their nation, and to themselves.

5. This would remind them of the history of their nation. Jacob might be called a *Syrian* from his hav-

ing resided some time with Laban in Padan Aram, Syria being called *Aram*.

12. The tythe of the third year had a peculiar appropriation. It is said that for two years this tythe was spent in feasting, of which the poor partook, but that every third year it was wholly given to them, and was therefore called *the poor man's tythe*, of this tythe Tobit says, Ch. 1. 7. *Another tenth part I sold away, and went, and spent it every year at Jerusalem. And the third I gave unto them to whom it was meet, as Debora my father's mother commanded me, because I was left an orphan by my father.*

13. This was not at the sanctuary, but only *as in the presence of the Lord*; for this tythe was spent at home. Or the meaning may be that they made this profession the next time that they attended at the sanctuary.

14. This is an allusion to the sacred rites of the Egyptians, and other antient heathens, who when they got in their harvests, and offered the first fruits, exhibited all the signs of deep mourning, previous to their rejoicing, in order to represent, as they said, the death of Osiris or Adonis, which was probably at first in commemoration of the decline and, as it were, the death of, the vegetable powers of nature, previous to their renovation in the Spring. *Spencer*, p. 573. Part of the first fruits they also ate in the temple of the idol, which was probably the *unclean use* here mentioned. The phrase *for the dead* probably refers to the lamentations for the death of Osiris, or Adonis.

Some

Some heathens applied their first fruits to magical purposes, and to impure rites. They also devoted some of their first fruits to their dead relations. Giving food to their ancestors is the constant practice of the Hindoos.

Ch. XXVII. 3. It is not certain how much was to be written upon these stones. Josephus says the curses which follow to the end of this chapter. Perhaps the ten commandments were added. But all the proper laws, exclusive of the exhortations to the observance of them, might be written in this manner. There was in various ways an abundant provision for making all the people well acquainted with their laws. Nothing was concealed from any person, as in the institutions of the Hindoos, and the Egyptian, Persian, and Grecian mysteries.

I think it not improbable that what was to be written on these stones was what is recorded in Exodus xxxiv, 10—26—For these contain the precepts that were peculiar to the Hebrew institutions, and are expressly said to be the terms of the covenant of God with their nation, as we may infer from what immediately follows v. 27—*And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words; for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel.* Also in the verse preceding these we read v. 10. *And he said, Behold I make a covenant, &c.*

4. The Samaritan copy of this verse has mount Gerizim; and this was probably the original reading, and led the Samaritans to erect their temple on that mountain,

tain, in preference to mount Ebal, when they had the choice of both.

5. See Ex. xx, 25. Iron, perhaps because used in war, and indeed the metals in general, were thought by the heathens to convey pollution.

9. It is not to be inferred from this language that any properly *new* covenant, or indeed any particular repetition of the old, was made on this occasion, both the parties at this time expressing their consent to it, *This day* means the present time in general, or in the present generation. For the covenant was solemnly ratified soon after their departure from Egypt, before the delivery of the ten commandments from mount Sinai, See Exod. xix, 3, &c.

12. On this mountain the city of Samaria was afterwards built. The ancestors of the tribes that are here mentioned were all born of free women.

13. All these were descended from the hand-maids of Leah and Rachel, except Reuben and Zebulon, the former of whom lay under a stigma for dishonouring his father, and the latter was the youngest of the sons of Leah. It is most probable that they who pronounced the blessings and the curses stood at the foot, or the beginning of the ascent of these mountains, and near to one another, tho' the mountains themselves were very near.

15. These curses are in general directed against crimes which might be committed in secret, so that only divine judgments could reach the offenders.

Ch. XXVIII. 1. The heathens expected all temporal blessings from the observance of their several religi-

ous rites, transmitted to them from their ancestors. Every thing of the same nature God promises the Israelites, on the condition of their observance of his laws.

9. *Holy* means *set apart for God*. They were to be distinguished from all other nations, and to stand in a peculiar relation to God, as their lawgiver and king.

10. Their distinguishing appellation would be *the people of Jehovah*.

15. As the defection of the Israelites from their religion was foreseen by the Divine Being, the curses in case of disobedience are more enlarged upon than the blessings for obedience, that they might have nothing to plead in their excuse especially that they had not had sufficient warning given them. These curses contain an enumeration of all the evils that can befall any people.

24. There being no rain, the dust would be blown about by the wind, and fall like rain.

25. This prediction concerning their dispersion into all parts of the world has been most remarkably fulfilled.

27. We have no particular account of the Israelites being more troubled with the disorders here mentioned than other people. But things of this nature easily escape the notice of historians.

29. The oppressions to which the Jews have been subjected in all christian countries are well known, being recorded by all historians.

36. This prediction was fulfilled in the captivity of three kings of Judah by the Chaldeans. But it was fulfilled in the most complete manner by the Romans,
a nation

a nation still more remote from them, and which at that time had no existence. Their worship of strange gods was most completely fulfilled in the captivity of the ten tribes, who, no doubt, became idolaters ; and are now it is thought Mahometans, being as Sir Wm. Jones is of opinion, the Afghans, a people between Persia and Hindostan. This prophecy was, however, in a great measure verified, in the forced conversion of the Jews to the Catholic religion, in Spain and Portugal.

37. This has been literally fulfilled, the Jews having been proverbially contemptible in all countries.

46 Here is an instance of the phrase *for ever* signifying only a long period. For Moses, as well as the other prophets, foretold the restoration of the nation, and their future prosperity.

49. This applies with remarkable exactness to the Romans, who were a nation very distant from Palestine.

52. This was literally fulfilled in the war with the Romans, when all the fortified places were taken, and especially Jerusalem, in the siege of which the sufferings of the inhabitants exceeded any thing that is on record in any history. In this siege women actually ate their own children.

62 Josephus says that in the siege of Jerusalem there died by famine, pestilence, and other ways, eleven hundred thousand persons ; and that more than ninety thousand were carried captive. In the war of Adrian afterwards, five hundred and eighty thousand were slain, besides great numbers that died in other ways. After
this

this the Jews were, indeed *few in number* ; but they are, no doubt, much increased since that time.

63. This was fully verified by Adrian, who forbade any Jews to reside in the country, or even to come in sight of it. And very few of them have lived in it from that time to the present day.

68. This may not mean that they would actually return to Egypt, but that they would be reduced to a state of servitude, similar to that which they had experienced in Egypt. Great numbers of Jews, however, were sent into Egypt after the Jewish war. Titus ordered all that were above seventeen years of age to labour in the public works in that country. The markets were then so overstocked with Jewish slaves, that they fetched no price.

Ch. XXIX. There does not appear to have been any new or distinct covenant made with the Israelites at this time, but only a repetition of the former in other words, and a more solemn denunciation of judgments in case of the violation of it, and promises of blessings on the observance of it.

2. This charge being delivered by Moses in the immediate view of his death, has a peculiar solemnity in it ; and the more as he was apprized that the effect of every thing he could say would only be a delay of the judgments denounced. His nation, he foresaw, would certainly depart from these institutions, and adopt the religious rites of the neighbouring nations, notwithstanding all that he could urge to dissuade them from it.

3 He saw that, notwithstanding their conviction of the reality of the miracles that had been exhibited before them, their minds were not sufficiently impressed with them. Inattention is always the effect of appearances that are constant, or very frequent. Thus we see that a constant view of the wonders of nature, which are as real proofs as any miracles of divine power and providence, makes no impression on the bulk of mankind, and some, who even attend to them, are atheists. In the time of Moses, however, and that of Joshua, both the faith of the people in the divine origin of their laws, and their obedience to them, was, we are informed universal. The defection began in the next generation, who had not themselves seen what their ancestors had.

5. That is, as I have observed before, they had not suffered from the want of necessary food, or clothing, in whatever manner they had been supplied.

15. This was probably an assembly of as many of the people as could hear him speak.

18 The word rendered *gall* should be *hemlock*.

19. That is, "tho' I gratify all my appetites, satisfying my desire of every thing that is forbidden."

22. From this it may be inferred that these divine judgments would not fall on individuals at the time of their transgression, but on the country; when the apostacy was become general; tho' in the verse preceding it seems to be intimated that particular offenders would be punished in some visible manner, as an example to others.

24. Had all the neighbouring nations continued heathens, this could hardly be supposed to be their language; tho' even heathens were of opinion that the deities of particular countries were to be worshiped in those countries, tho' not in others. It is however, literally applicable to the neighbouring nations in their present state, who are either christians or Mahometans, who believe in the divine origin of the Jewish religion, and are persuaded that the present desolation of the country is the consequence of the apostacy of the inhabitants from it.

29. That is, these are faithful and plain warnings, counsels of God which he conceals from other nations, but are made known to us for our instruction and admonition.

Ch. XXX. 6. It is evident from this that Moses had a clear foresight of the future restoration of the Israelites, as well as of their apostacy and dispersion; and that tho' for some time they would be disobedient and refractory, they would afterwards repent, and God would again receive them into his favour, and make them the great and happy nation that he had promised to their ancestors.

7. Notwithstanding the justice of God in punishing the Israelites, the nations that should oppress them, acting unjustly, would draw upon themselves as heavy judgments as those which they had been the means of inflicting. Of this the later prophets give much clearer information. Let both christians and Mahometan powers read this and be alarmed; as this time of recompence seems to be now at hand.

12. No Israelite could plead ignorance of the law: It was promulgated in the plainest manner. It was expressed in the most intelligible language. They had constant access to it, and an order of men was appointed to explain it to them, and at certain stated times they were required to hear it read to them.

20. The affection and earnestness with which Moses, here and on all other occasions, recommended to the Israelites the strict observance of their religion, is truly remarkable. We find nothing parallel to it in any heathen writer.

Ch. XXXI. 1. This seems to be another address to the people, subsequent to that contained in the preceding chapter.

7. This was confirming the authority of Joshua, as a person especially appointed by God to succeed Moses in the command of the people, tho he had not the same frequent communication with God that Moses had.

9. This was probably all that he had written of the whole Pentateuch. And a more authentic publication was never made of any writing, or public act of any kind. It could not but be well known at that time, and consequently ever after, that such a work had been committed to the custody of the priests, and not for their private use, but for that of all the people. Had any book containing a set of laws been produced in after times, as what had been delivered to them before, and that not to a single person, but to the people at large, but which had not been known to them before, the falsehood of the pretension must have been notorious. And as
these

these books contained institutions to which the people in general were much averse, the imposture could not but have been detected, and exposed, with the greatest indignation and contempt.

10. This public reading of the law was to be at the feast of tabernacles, the greatest of all their festivals, when, the harvest and vintage being compleated, they had the most leisure to attend to it.

11. This public reading of the law the Jews say was in part the duty of the king, who began it, and that it was afterwards taken up by the priests.

14. Moses and Joshua only seem to have been present at the following solemn declaration.

19. This remarkable prediction of the apostasy of the Israelites from their religion, and the fatal consequences of it, recorded in this public manner, was the greatest aggravation of their guilt that can well be imagined. It must, however, no doubt, have had a good effect in retarding, and lessening, the evil, and also will have more in the removal of it in future time.

21. It appears from Amos v. 26, that even during their travelling in the wilderness, under the immediate guidance of God, many of the Israelites practiced rites of idolatrous worship, such probably as they had been accustomed to in Egypt.

26. This was not within the ark, but in the most holy place, to which the high-priest only had access on the annual day of atonement. There were, no doubt, many other copies kept by the priests, and it could only have been on very extraordinary occasions that they had recourse to this most authentic copy.

Ch. XXXII. 1. There is a peculiar solemnity in this poetical composition, excellently calculated to vindicate the ways of God towards the Israelitish nation, whose future history is here distinctly portrayed. As if he did not expect that the people during their predicted apostasy would not give any attention to him, he begins with calling upon the heavens and the earth to bear witness against them.

2. He, however, expresses a wish, before he proceeds any farther, that his warnings might have a salutary effect, like that of the rain on the growth of grass.

4. This declaration of the divine character, and of the equity of his providence, is peculiarly well suited to this occasion.

6. In this manner he upbraids them for their folly, as well as their ingratitude, towards a Being who had done such great things for them.

9. Having divided mankind into distinct nations, and assigned to each their portion of the surface of the earth, he chose the posterity of Jacob for his own peculiar people, gave them a delightful country, and shewed them extraordinary favours, the particulars of which are here recited.

10. The bird here alluded to is to a proverb remarkable for its tender care of its young, often carrying them on its back.

13. In hot climates hills make an agreeable variety in a country, and the hills of Palestine are not craggy mountains, but eminently fruitful, cool, and well watered. On this account it was preferable to Egypt, which

which is altogether flat. Besides the olive, which yields oil, will grow in the most rocky places.

15. Notwithstanding these favours, they made the most ungrateful returns, and apostatized from his worship. *Yeshurun* is probably a diminutive of *Israel*, the radical letters being the same in both.

17. It is uncertain what idea Moses annexed to the word **דִּמְיוֹן**, here rendered *demons*. But as invisible beings of a nature inferior to the Supreme became objects of worship, and probably about this time, they may be here placed in opposition to him. The origin of idolatry, being then recent, could not but have been well known, and it did not begin with denying the existence, or the supremacy, of the creator of all things, but with providing him deputies to superintend particular parts of the administration of the universe.

19. This is purely prophetic, and delivered a long time before the event.

21. As they provoked him by abandoning his worship for that of contemptible objects, he would provoke them by subjecting them to a contemptible nation.

22. The language of this prophetic song very much resembles that of the preceding curses. It is an enumeration of all the evils that can befall any country.

31. This was acknowledged by Balaam, by the Philistines, and on several occasions by other nations.

36. From this place this prophetic song alludes to the restoration of the nation, after their apostacy and the punishment of it.

41 This is an allusion to the judgments that will
be

be inflicted on the nations that should oppress the Israelites.

43. This represents the final state of the Israelitish nation when they would be restored to their country, and other nations would be happy under them.

49. Abarim was a chain of hills of which Nebo was one.

Ch. XXXIII. 1. As Jacob delivered a prophecy concerning each of his twelve sons, a short time before his death, Moses here does the same, tho' there is less of prophecy, and more of benediction in this address. In both there is much difficulty, the sense of particular passages being very uncertain.

2. These mountains were near to each other, so that his shining from them all, or his appearing from them all in favour of the Israelites, is only the same idea amplified. He is here represented as accompanied with a host of angels, called *saints*.

He came with myriads from Kadesh, and he came from Meribah Kadesh. LXX.

3. In this he describes the submission of the people to God, sitting at his feet to receive his commands.

Truly he loveth the nations, and all them that are holy he will bless. For they shall sit down at his feet, and they shall receive of his words. K.

4. *A law has he commanded unto us. CONJ. K. Thence (i. e. from mount Sinai) he commanded a law. CONJ. C.*

6. The tribe of Reuben was not numerous, and agreeable to the prediction of Jacob, it did not in any respect excel the others, tho' he was the first born.

Lct

Let his men be a number, or numerous. In one reading of the LXX this is applied to Simeon, who is otherwise overlooked in this benediction.

7. The tribe of Judah always had the pre-eminence over the other tribes. Here it is represented as leading them to battle, and he prays that they may return victorious. No mention is made of Simeon, perhaps because this tribe was settled within that of Judah.

10. The Levites are commended for the zeal they shewed in the cause of God after the worship of the golden calf, when, as they had been commanded, they slew without distinction all the idolaters they met with, not sparing their nearest friends or relations. It was the office of the high priest who was of this tribe to consult God, which was said to be by *urim and thummim*, or the breast plate with precious stones, which he wore on such occasions. It was also the business of the Levites in general to instruct the people in the law, as well as to officiate at the sanctuary.

12. Jerusalem was, at least in part, within the tribe of Benjamin; and this tribe being afterwards associated with that of Judah, was better protected than the others.

14. The land appropriated to the tribe of Ephraim seems to have been peculiarly fertile and pleasant. It was hilly, but the hills were cultivated to the tops. By *fruits of the sun* we may understand products that are annual. What was meant by those of the *moon* is uncertain, but this was always supposed to have some influence on the productions of the earth. Those of the hills were the mineral substances, which abound in them.

17. Joseph is compared to the first born of bulls, both on account of the great strength of his tribe, and because, like the first born son in the family, he had a double inheritance, two of the tribes being descended from him, a privilege which Reuben lost on account of his incest. The power of this tribe is here particularly alluded to, and it was the principal of the ten tribes which revolted from the family of David.

18. The tribe of Zebulun being situated on the sea coast, their going out in ships may perhaps be alluded to in this place; but this is uncertain, as none of the Israelites were addicted to commerce. The tribe of Issachar applied wholly to agriculture, and the feeding of cattle. It is also thought to have been a learned tribe from 1. Chron. xii. 32.

19. This seems to allude to some peculiar zeal in this tribe to invite the others to resort to the sanctuary. But there is nothing in the history that throws any light on this. It may refer to a time that is yet future, as indeed may the prediction concerning Zebulun, and also those of Jacob.

20. Gad was a warlike tribe, 1 Chron. xviii. 8. and all the allusions agree with that idea. Martin the Benedictine supposes this to be a reference to the ancient custom of scalping, till used in North America. See Heb. iii. 13.

21. *They demanded their portion of the lawgiver with the princes* Conj. Ho. But there is uncommon difficulty in this passage.

22. The hills of Bashan are said to have been infested with lions, Cant. iv 8, and Dan is compared to one of them.

23 The

23. The inheritance of Naphthali was in Galilee, which was celebrated for its fertility. The West and the South may respect the situation of Dan, which was mentioned just before. And the Danites took possession of Laish, in the northern part of the country.

24. The name of *Asher* signifies *blessedness*, and a peculiar populousness, as well as plenty of all things, seems to be predicted concerning this tribe. The metals here mentioned might be dug out of mount Lebanon, near to which the inheritance of this tribe lay. But I suspect that we must wait for the return of these tribes before we can see the propriety of these predictions.

26. This general benediction, with which Moses concludes what he says of each of the tribes, alludes, I think, to their future most distinguished and enviable situation; when they will have risen superior to all their difficulties, and have triumphed over all their enemies.

28. *Because Jacob, &c.* CONJ. Ho.

Ch. XXXIV. 1. Pisgah is said to have been the highest eminence of mount Nebo. This chapter cannot be supposed to have been written by Moses, tho' it was naturally added by some other person to what he had written, and probably by Joshua, or by his direction. But as Dan, which was not conquered till after the death of Joshua, is mentioned in this place, as the northern boundary of the country, this circumstance may have been added by Samuel, or some other person who lived after that event.

5. This part of the country had been in possession of

the Moabites, but it had been conquered from them by the Amorites, and from these by the Israelites.

6. As no person appears to have been present at the death or burial of Moses, what is here said with relation to them must have been from conjecture. And as we find Moses together with Elijah, on the mount of transfiguration with Jesus, he must either have been raised from the dead at that time, or not have properly died, but have been translated like Enoch, or have undergone the change that Paul says will take place on those who shall be found living at the coming of Christ. As Moses was alive in the time of our Saviour, he, no doubt, is living now, as well as the other persons mentioned above, tho' we are wholly ignorant of the manner of their subsistence or employment.

7. This apparent vigour at the near approach of death was also the case of Aaron, and is that of many very aged persons. All their senses are perfect, they make no complaint of sickness or pain, and yet find themselves suddenly exhausted, and die as if they fell asleep.

10. Moses was, no doubt, in several respects superior to any of the Jewish prophets who lived before the time of Jesus, and had a more intimate kind of communication with God, who always spoke to him in an articulate voice, and in the day time, and never in a vision of the night, or through the medium of any scenical representation. But Jesus seems to have had a still more intimate kind of communication with God than even this, without any articulate voice or vision, in some manner of which we have no information. In a general

ral way he seems to have performed his miracles as by a power lodged with himself ; and it only appears from what he said at the resurrection of Lazarus that mental prayer always preceded the working of his miracles, and by his general declarations that *of himself he could do nothing*, but that the *Father who was in, or with him, did these works.*

12. *The great vision.* SAM.

I shall close these *Notes* on the five books of Moses with a *Dissertation*, in which I shall collect into one view the principal circumstances in which his institutions differ from those of the Egyptians and other ancient nations ; from which it will appear that they could not have been derived from them. At the same time their superiority to any thing that ever was devised by heathens, the most famed for their wisdom, will be a sufficient evidence that they could not have been devised by Moses himself ; but were dictated, as he constantly says, by the Supreme Being, as the proper law-giver and king of the Israelitish nation.



A DISSERTATION

IN WHICH ARE DEMONSTRATED

THE

ORIGINALITY, AND SUPERIOR EXCELLENCE,

OF THE

MOSAIC INSTITUTIONS.

THEY who suppose that Moses himself was the author of the institutions, civil or religious, that bear his name, and that in framing them he borrowed much from the Egyptians, or other antient nations, must never have compared them together. Otherwise they could not but have perceived many circumstances in which they differ most essentially from them all. I shall endeavour to point out the more considerable of them.

1. No heathen ever conceived an idea of so great an *object* as that of the institutions of Moses, which appears to have been nothing less than the instruction of all mankind in the great doctrine of the unity and universal moral government of God, as the maker of the world, and the common parent of all the human race, in opposition to the polytheism and idolatry which then prevailed; which, besides, being grossly absurd in its principles, and leading to endless superstitions, threatened the world with a deluge of vice and misery.

For this purpose the Hebrew nation was placed in the most conspicuous situation, among all the great civilized nations of the world, which were universally addicted to idolatry of the grossest kind, to divinations, necromancy, and other superstitions of a similar nature, and practised as acts of religion; some of their rites abominably licentious, and others the most shockingly cruel, as the necessary means of recommending themselves to the various objects of their worship.

As all mankind imagined that their outward prosperity depended upon the observance of their respective religions, that of the Hebrew nation was made to do so in the most conspicuous manner, as a visible lesson to all the world. They were to prosper beyond all other nations while they adhered to their religion, and to suffer in a manner equally exemplary and conspicuous in consequence of their departure from it. Of this all mankind might easily judge,

These great ideas occur in the sacred books of the Hebrews, and no where else. They are all distinctly advanced by Moses, and more fully unfolded in the writings

writings of the later prophets. But certainly nothing so great and sublime could have been suggested to Moses from any thing that he saw in Egypt, or could have heard of in other countries.

2. In no system of religion besides that of Moses was *purity of morals* any part of it. All the heathen religions were systems of mere *ceremonies*, on the observance of which it was imagined that the prosperity of the several states depended; and the sole business of the *priests* was to attend to the due observance of these rites, many of which were so far from being favourable to morals, that they were of the most impure and abominable nature, as is well known to all who have any knowledge of them.

On the contrary, it appears not only from the ten commandments, but from all the writings of Moses, and those of the prophets who succeeded him, that the purest morality, the most favourable to private and public happiness, was the principal and ultimate object of the system. The books of Moses abound with *precepts of morality* inculcated in the most forcible manner, and they are distinguished from *laws* by having no penalty annexed to them. Sacrifices, and ceremonial observances of every kind, are always represented as of no signification without morals; and whenever the comparison is made between them, they are spoken of with the greatest contempt. Such precepts as these; *Be ye holy for I am holy*; and *what does the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God*, could never have been borrowed from any heathen system of religion. In this most important

respect the institutions of Moses are a great *original*, and were never copied by any other lawgiver.

3. No where, in all the heathen world, could Moses have heard of such a proper *national worship*, as that which he introduced. The Hebrew nation had not *only* one single object of their worship, in which they differed essentially from all other nations, but one national altar, one precise ritual, and only one place for the meeting of the whole nation at the public festivals. Three times in the course of every year all the males of a proper age were required to attend at this place, where they spent about a week in acts of worship and decent festivity; and at one of them the law was publicly recited, that all persons might be acquainted with it, and with the awful sanctions of it. A whole tribe, a twelfth part of the nation, was set apart for services of a religious nature, and their provision made to depend in a great measure upon their performance of them, being not in lands cultivated by themselves, but in the produce of lands cultivated by others.

At this one national altar sacrifices were performed every morning and evening, in the name, and at the expence, of the whole nation; and the manner in which this was done was invariable, and not left to the discretion of the performers. *

In all other countries the places of worship were numerous; and the diversity in the modes of worship vari-

ed

* In the temple of Hierapolis, dedicated to the Syrian goddess, there were sacrifices every morning and evening. *Jurieu sur les dogmes*, &c. p. 778. But this is the only instance of the kind in the heathen world, and by whom these sacrifices were provided, and how far this obligation, and the benefits of them, extended, is not known.

ed with the objects of them. In Egypt in particular the different *names* were exceedingly hostile to each other on this account. Hence, arose endless and discordant superstitions.

4. In no country besides that of the Hebrews were the *public festivals* expressly instituted in commemoration of such great events [respecting their history and religion. It is peculiar to this nation also that the directions for the celebration of them were reduced to writing at the time of their institution, so that there could never be any uncertainty about the origin, or the reasons, of them. They were only three, the passover, on their deliverance from their state of servitude in Egypt, when the first born of all the Egyptians were destroyed, and all theirs preserved; the pentecost, on the giving of the law from mount Sinai; and the feast of tabernacles, in commemoration of their living in tents and booths during their travels through the wilderness.

At the first of these festivals the first fruits of the year were solemnly presented, at the second the harvest was got in, and at the last the vintage, and all the greater labours of the year were closed. No heathen festivals were so well adapted to important events as these. Among the heathen nations the festivals were numerous, and perplexing. More than sixty were celebrated by the Athenians, the origin and reason of their institution were uncertain, and none of them were calculated to answer any important moral purpose, but were too often the occasion not of innocent festivity, but of intemperance and debauch. Several of the heathen festivals were celebrated in a manner the most disgusting, and shocking

ing to common modesty and common sense. At the *Dionysia* at Athens and also at other festivals, *phalli* were carried in procession, and at this time "the whole city was filled with revelling and licentiousness." *Potter's Antiquities of Greece* p. 385; and at the *Thesmophoria* they carried *mulli*, 403. There was even a festival instituted in honour of the phallus, and with the Hindoos the *lingam* is the symbol of their principal deity. At the *Aphrodisia*, in honour of Venus, in Cyprus several mysterious rites were practiced; when all that were initiated in them offered a piece of money to the goddesses as a harlot, and received as a token of her favour a measure of salt, and a phallus, p. 373. At Corinth her festival was celebrated by common prostitutes, *ib.* The *Cotytia*, the goddesses of wantonness, was celebrated by the Athenians and others "with such rites as were most acceptable to a goddesses who delighted in nothing so much as lewdness and debauchery," p. 409.

At the *Omophagia*, in honour of Bacchus madness was counterfeited, and the worshippers ate the entrails of the goats that were sacrificed raw and bloody, in imitation of what was related of that god. 439. One of the most solemn rites of religion at Rome, and on which much was thought to depend, was the *Lupercalia*, a festival of purification, celebrated in February. The sacrifices were goats and a dog. Two sons of patricians had their foreheads stained with the bloody knife of the *Luperci* (an order of priests employed on that occasion) and were wiped with locks of wool, dipped in milk; and while this was done they were obliged to laugh.

laugh. Then, cutting the skins of the goats into thongs, they ran thro the streets naked to the middle, striking every person they met; and women particularly threw themselves in their way, on the idea that those lasses promoted conception, *Kennet's Antiquities of Rome*, p. 65.

It would be easy to produce more examples of the indecency and absurdity of the festivals of the heathens, and those of Greece were chiefly borrowed from Egypt. Why did not Moses do the same? Such acts would, no doubt, have been as acceptable to his nation as they were to others. This was evident from his own history of the Israelites joining the Midianites in the worship of Baal Peor.

5. In no other country was the place, and other circumstances, of the public worship so well calculated to inspire a profound respect for the object of it as among the Hebrews. No heathen temp'le could be compared for riches and splendour with the temple of Solomon, or even the tabernacle of Moses, erected in the wilderness, tho' designed for a temporary use, and portable. Into the holy place none were allowed to enter besides the priests, and into the holy of holies only the high-priest, and that only once in the year, when he was habited in the most humble manner, to confess his own sins and those of the nation. At other times his dress was the most costly and splendid, far beyond that of any high priest, or any prince, in the heathen world. The garments of the common priests were particularly neat and decent, but not costly,

When

When the nation was in the wilderness, moving from place to place, they were far from marching in a disorderly manner, or encamping without regularity. The place of the tabernacle was in the centre, each of twelve tribes had its prescribed place on the North, or South, the East, or West side of it, three tribes on each; and the station of the Levites was next to it. These too had their station according to their families, and each had their peculiar duty in taking the tabernacle down, carrying, and erecting it. The priests only were allowed to handle the most sacred utensils, the Levites who carried them not being allowed to touch them. When the ark, the place of which was the holy of holies, and over which was the immediate presence of God, was removed, it was borne not by common Levites, but by priests; and the staves by which it was supported were fastened to it in such a manner that there was no occasion to remove them from their sockets; which would have required the handling of the ark, and too near an approach to it.

How different from this were the most solemn processions of the heathens, when they carried the images of their gods from one place to another, generally on the idea, at least in the East, of giving them an airing, and amusing them with an excursion from their temples and back again. On one grand festival of the Burmans, the laity endeavour to please their deities by amusements of all kinds, as wrestling, dancing, music, plays, * and fire works. See *Buchanan on the religion of the*

* On the same principle, probably, theatrical exhibitions were considered by the Greeks as appertaining to their religion, being first performed on the festival of Bacchus.

of the *Burmans in the Asiatic Researches*, Vol. vi, p. 292. The *Lectisternia* of the Romans were directed by the same principle. In time of public danger they made a public feast in the temples, and the statues of the gods were brought in rich beds with pillows, and placed in the most honourable part of the temple, as the principal guests. *Kennet's Antiquities of Rome*, p. 84.

The ark of the Hebrews was never removed on any such ideas as these. Indeed, it contained no *image* to which such an excursion, or entertainment, could apply; and after the building of the temple, it was never, on any occasion, removed out of it. Before this it had, by the order of God, been carried by the priests to the brink of the river Jordan, the waters of which were divided as their feet touched them, and it was kept in the middle of its channel till all the people had passed over. Also, on particular solemn occasions it seems to have been permitted to be carried as a token of the divine presence. From this, and many other circumstances in their ritual, the Hebrews must have had a much higher idea of the object of their worship, than any of the heathens had of theirs.

6. Sacrificing was a mode of worship more antient than idolatry or the institutions of Moses; but among the heathens various superstitious customs were introduced respecting it, which were all excluded from the religion of the Hebrews.

In the Hebrew ritual the original and most natural idea of a sacrifice, viz. that of a *gift* by way of acknowledgment for the blessings we receive, or the par-
taking

taking of an *entertainment* with the object of worship, was strictly adhered to ; nothing being offered but what was an article of food. or what was used at entertainments, as incense, with which at this day the entertainments in the East are closed ; whereas several of the heathen sacrifices consisted of animals that were never eaten, but such as it was supposed the deity would be gratified in having destroyed. The Egyptians, from whom it might be supposed Moses would borrow the most, Plutarch says, always sacrificed such animals as were hateful to their deities.

The heathen sacrifices were also different according to the rank and character of the deity to whom they were offered. Thus to the infernal gods they offered black victims, to the good white ones, to the barren, barren ones, to the fruitful those that were pregnant, to the masculine gods, males, to the feminine females. To Hecate they sacrificed a dog, to Venus doves, to Mars a bull, and to Ceres a sow. *Potter*, p. 216.

In the laws of Moses, in which we find even the most minute circumstances of the act of sacrificing prescribed, there is no mention of any thing preceding the slaying of the animal besides its being sound, and of a proper age. It was not brought with any garlands, and no *ουλαί*, or cakes of barley and salt were put upon its back. No wine was poured on its horns. No hair was taken from its forehead to be thrown into the fire on the altar.

No methods were used to make it appear willing to be sacrificed ; no putting of corn into its ear, to make it seem to nod its assent ; no stroking its back with the knife, to make it move its tail, as if it was pleased with
its

its destination. With the Hebrews it was not esteemed any unlucky omen if the animal escaped the stroke of the sacrificer, if it struggled much, or seemed to die with difficulty ; and nothing is said about inspecting the entrails, with a view to divination, which was a principal object in all the heathen sacrifices.

With the Romans there was a particular order of priests, called *haruspices*, whose sole business it was to examine the inwards, and especially the liver, and to form a judgment of the favour of the gods, and their consequent expectation, from the design of the sacrifice. No observation for this purpose was directed to be made by the Hebrews of the form or clearness of the flame as the flesh was consumed, or of any other of the observances of the heathens, equally superstitious and unmeaning.

The use that was made of the blood of the victims was peculiar to the Hebrew ritual, and certainly not borrowed from any heathen customs that could have been known to Moses. No heathens knew anything of the sprinkling of the blood, in the peculiarly solemn manner in which it was to be done by the Hebrew priests ;* and so far were they from rigorously abstaining from the eating of blood; that, in their sacrifices to the infernal deities they partook of it, as a method of feasting with them ; and in the *Tauribolium* the offerer was covered with it from head

* In Homer, who is exceedingly exact in mentioning all the ceremonial of sacrifices to the celestial gods, no mention whatever of any use to which the blood was applied. When the Scandinavians sacrificed men part of the blood was sprinkled over the people, but it is not said with what view. *Northern Antiquities*, from *Mallet*, Vol. 1. p. 136.

head to foot, and kept himself in that condition as long as he could.

As Moses did not adopt any of the heathen customs, it is equally evident that they borrowed nothing from him with respect to sacrifices. With them we find no such distinction of sacrifices as is made in the books of Moses, such as *burnt offerings*, *sin offerings*, *trespass offerings*, and *peace offerings*, or of the *heaving* or *waving* of the sacrifices. Those particulars, therefore, he could not have had from them, whether we can discover any reason for them or not. They either had their origin in the time of Moses, or, which is most probable, were prior to his time, and to the existence of idolatry.

Lastly, among all the heathens, and especially in the time of Moses, *human sacrifices* were considered as the most acceptable to the gods ; but in the laws of Moses nothing is mentioned with greater abhorrence ; and it is expressly declared to have been a principal cause of the expulsion of the idolatrous inhabitants of Canaan. The right of the Divine Being to claim such sacrifices is intimated by the command to sacrifice Isaac, but it was declined, and a ram substituted in his place. Also, when the Divine Being claimed the first born of all the Israelites in the place of those of the Egyptians which were destroyed, none of them were sacrificed but the service of the Levites was accepted instead of them ; and whereas there were not Levites enow for that purpose, the rest were redeemed by the sacrifice of brute animals, which evinced the determination of the Divine Being in no case to accept of that of men.

7. If the heathens had any *temples* before the time of Moses, which is very uncertain, and on the whole, I think, not probable, they were constructed in a manner very different from the tabernacle, or the temple of Solomon. They were so far alike, that they were each divided into *two parts*, but for very different purposes. Those of the heathens were termed the *sacred* and the *profane*, and in the middle, probably between them both, was the statue of the god, raised on a pedestal; but the furniture of the Hebrew and the heathen temples, and the business that was done in them, bore no resemblance to each other.

We nowhere read in any account of heathen worship, of such a symbol of the divine presence as the covering of the ark between the cherubims in the holy of holies; or if there was an altar of incense, there was no *table of shew bread*, or such a *candlestick* as was in the holy place. The fire upon the great altar of the Hebrews was always kept up; but it was for the purpose of consuming all the remains of sacrifices; and the lamps were kept burning because the place in which they were had no other light. But this could not be said in favour of the *perpetual fires* among the heathens, either those of the Persians, or that of the Vestals at Rome, which were of no use for the purpose of fire or of light.

8. Both the Hebrews and the heathens allowed the privilege of *asylum* to those who fled to their temples, and especially the altars; founded on the idea of the rights of hospitality, which laid the inhabitant of a house under an obligation to protect his guests. But with the heathens this was carried to a length equally

superstitious and dangerous to the community; because whatever was the crime with which any person was charged, the criminal could not be apprehended, and much less punished, without the dread of incurring the utmost vengeance of the deity, who it was supposed protected him. Rather than do this, they would, in extreme cases, uncover the roofs of their temples, or even burn them, in order to destroy the criminal. On no account would they directly offer any violence to his person; and in all ordinary cases he was perfectly safe. Different deities were thought more particularly to favour persons of different classes. Thus the temple of Diana at Ephesus was an asylum for debtors, and that of Theseus at Athens for slaves. At length, indeed, the abuses of these asylums were so great that Tiberius made several regulations respecting them. *Potters Antiquities*, p. 201.

But no person charged with homicide, or any other crime, was protected by flying to the altar of the Hebrews, except till the cause could be heard by regular judges; when, if he appeared to be guilty, he was ordered to be taken even from the altar itself, and put to death. In case of accidental homicide, there was a wise and singular provision in the law of Moses, and certainly not copied from that of any other nation; allowing the person who had been the cause of death to another to fly to a city of refuge, where, if he was proved to be innocent, he might continue in safety till the death of the high priest. But if he was proved to have killed the other by design, it was no place of refuge for him. It only protected him from the violence of the relations

relations of the deceased. It would, however, operate as a salutary caution against any thing that might endanger the life of another, as the person who had been the innocent occasion of any person's death suffered a considerable inconvenience, by being obliged to leave his habitation and live among strangers. It is not, said that he might not make his peace with the family of the deceased, and then be at liberty to return.

9. Sacrifices could not be performed by heathen or Hebrew priests without proper *instruments*, and vessels of various kinds ; but such a provision of vessels adapted to this use as were made even for the service of the tabernacle, we nowhere read of in the account of any heathen temple. When the tabernacle was erected in the wilderness the heads of each of the twelve tribes presented a silver charger of the weight of an hundred and thirty shekels, which was between four and five pounds Troy, and a golden spoon of ten shekels, which was between four and five ounces Troy. The gold and silver vessels provided by Solomon are said "not to have been weighed, because they were exceeding many." 1 Kings, vii, 47 ; and when they were returned from Babylon by Cyrus, after having been carried thither by Nebuchadnezzar (when from their richness probably, as well as by way of triumph, they had been used at the feast of Belsazzar ; and after it is probable many of them were kept back) there were "thirty chargers of gold ; a thousand chargers of silver, thirty basins of gold, silver basins of a second sort four hundred and ten, and of other vessels a thousand. All the vessels of gold and silver were five thousand four hundred and twenty." "dred "

"dred." Ezra. i, 9, &c. And after the plundering of the temple by several of the needy and irreligious kings of Judah, it is not very probable that all the vessels provided by Solomon were found by Nebuchadnezzar, or that all that were found by him were carried to his treasury.

Such a provision of gold and silver vessels there is no reason to think was ever made not only for the use of any one particular temple, but for all those of any one country in all the heathen world ; so much more magnificent and respectable was the national worship of the Hebrews than that of any heathen nation whatever. The temple itself, and the other utensils belonging to it, not mentioned in the return from Babylon, were in proportion to these more portable vessels ; so that it must have far exceeded any temple in the heathen world. This must be concluded from the account of the construction of it, and of its various furniture, in the second book of Kings, Ch. v, 13, &c. and 2 Chron. Ch. iii, 4, &c. It furnished employment in one way or other for more than a hundred thousand men for seven years.

10. Had Moses copied any thing from the heathens he would probably have introduced something of their *mysteries*, which were rites performed in secret, and generally in the night, to which peculiar privileges were annexed, and which it was deemed the greatest crime to reveal ; all of them circumstances of a suspicious nature, and evidently liable to great abuse.

The most remarkable of these mysteries were the Eleusinian, which were celebrated at Athens every four years, and continued nine days. Whatever these

these rites were, it was made death to reveal them; and if any person not regularly initiated was present at this exhibition, he was put to death without mercy. "The candidate for initiation was admitted in the "night into a place called the *mystical temple*, where "some strange objects were presented to him, some- "times resplendent with light, and then involved in "darkness; sometimes resembling thunder and light- "ning, and sometimes with other frightful noises, and "terrible appearances. The garments in which they "were initiated were never to be cast off; and when "they could not be worn any longer, they made swad- "ling clothes of them for their children, or dedicated "them to Ceres and Proserpine. During this festival "it was unlawful to arrest any person, or for the initia- "ted to sit on the covering of a well, to eat beans, mul- "lets, or weasels. In these solemnities baskets were "carried by women, containing sesamum, carded wool, "some grains of salt, a serpent, pomegranates, reeds, "boughs of ivy, a sort of cakes called *φδρα*, pop- "pies and other things." Unmeaning and unintelli- gible as these ceremonies were, it was taken for granted that those who had performed them lived in a greater degree of happiness than other men, both before and after death. See *Potter's Antiquities*, Vol. 1, p. 389.

Nothing, surely, like this can be found in the institu- tions of Moses. There was nothing in the Hebrew ri- tual of worship that was any *secret*. Every thing is ex- pressly described in the written law; and tho' none but priests could enter the holy place, or the holy of holies besides the high priest, every thing that was done by

them there is as particularly described as what was done by the people without ; and no service whatever was performed in the night, except the attendance at the great altar, to keep the fire in a proper state for consuming all the remains of victims ; and of this no mention is made in the ritual. It is only presumed by the Jewish writers on the subject that it must have been done of course.

11. There was provision for an *oracle* among the Hebrews as well as with the heathens ; but how great was the difference between them. With the Hebrews the responses were in a clear articulate voice, free from ambiguity, and only given on solemn occasions. They were also perfectly gratuitous, and confined to no particular time. Whereas the oracles of the heathens were always obscure, and generally ambiguous, delivered in a frantic manner, only at particular seasons, and always attended with great expence. In many cases also the answers were given in dreams, and various kinds of omens, liable to a variety of interpretations. But when any divine admonition was delivered by a Hebrew prophet, it was always in plain language, as a message from God, and without any peculiar gesticulation, or distortion of features.

12. Both the Hebrews and the heathens had symbolical *purifications* ; but there was a great difference between them. Nothing was used for this purpose at the tabernacle, or temple, for the priests or the people, but pure water, in which they washed their hands and feet, or bathed the whole body, as the occasion required,

But

But the heathens, if they could not conveniently procure sea water, which they thought to be more efficacious than any other, put salt into common water ; and besides this they dipped into it a burning brand from the altar, flaming sulphur, or a branch of olive or laurel, the reasons of which it is impossible for us to trace, and they were soon lost among themselves, tho' they continued to be practised as antient rites. In some cases purification was performed by drawing round a person a squill or an onion, *Potter* p. 223.

For the purpose of purification after the touch of a dead body Moses directed a sprinkling with water in which had been put the ashes of a red heifer, burned with particular ceremonies ; the instrument for sprinkling being a bunch of hyssop fastened to a stick of cedar wood with a scarlet thread ; which is perhaps the most obscure article in all the Hebrew ritual. But all the particulars above mentioned bore some relation to cleansing ; and probably something of this kind had been practised before the time of Moses, or the origin of idolatry. He certainly did not take it from the Egyptians, or any other heathen nation.

The circumstances to which the idea of *uncleanness*, requiring purification, was annexed, were considerably different with the Hebrews and the heathens. Whatever it was that was the cause of uncleanness according to the Hebrew ritual, respecting a man's person, his garments, or his house, it was accompanied with something that was naturally offensive, and which in excess might have been injurious to health. But this idea will not explain many cases of uncleanness among the heathens,
and

and some of their most sacred rites were most filthy and disgusting, as the *tauribolium*, mentioned before, in which the person so purified was covered with blood, his hair and garments full of it; and in this condition he continued as long as he could, without washing himself, or changing his dress.

13. Religion directed the choice of proper articles of food both with the heathens and the Hebrews; but with the latter nothing was forbidden but what was, in a greater or less degree, unwholesome, and what is at this day generally found to be so. But no sensible reason can be given for the Egyptians abstaining from the use of mutton, the Syrians from fish, the Hindoos from the flesh of cows, or the priests in some countries from the flesh of animals of any kind. The Hebrews were not forbidden the use of wine even in the case of the priests, except during the time of their actual ministrations. In this we see no appearance of superstition.

14. The Hebrew priests were not obliged to practice any peculiar *austerities*, as were many of those of the heathens. They might marry, and have families. The high-priest only was forbidden to marry a widow. But the priests of Cibeles were even castrated, and the hierophants at the Eleusinian mysteries were not allowed to have any communication with women; and to make this the easier to them, it is said to have been their custom to anoint themselves with the juice of hemlock, as a means of extinguishing natural heat. *Potter* p. 391. In Crete the priests of Jupiter not only abstained from flesh meat, but from any thing that was boiled. The Roman vestals

tals were under an obligation to live single under no less a penalty than that of being buried alive.

Moses assigned no part of the national worship to women, but in the several of the heathen temples there were priestesses, as well as priests, and the oracle at Delphi was always delivered by a woman.

15. As the heathens had many religious rites of which we find nothing in the institutions of Moses, so there are in his several particulars of which we find no traces in theirs.

Where, in all the heathen world, could Moses have got the idea of his *annual fast* for the purpose of a general confession of sin, and absolution, the latter denoted by the fine emblem of the dismissal of a goat over the head of which the confession had been made. There were many rites of the heathen religions celebrated with appearances of grief and deep affliction, but for no such moral purpose as this. The festivals in honour of Adonis in the East, and in Greece, were begun in this manner; but from this they passed immediately to every species of licentious mirth. It was only in commemoration of his supposed death in the first case, and of his recovery in the second.

16. A weekly *sabbath*, or a day of rest from all labour, a *sabbatical year*, in which the ground remained untilled a whole year, and the *jubilee*, to be mentioned hereafter, were institutions peculiar to the Hebrews, and what Moses could not have borrowed from any other nation.

The *weekly sabbath* continually reminded the Hebrews of the creation of the world in six days, or peri-

ods, as opposed to the general opinion of the heathens, that the world had existed from eternity, without any intelligent author. The sabbatical year served to remind them that the country they occupied was not properly theirs, but God's, who only gave them the use of it on such terms as he thought proper.

The rite of *circumcision* on the eighth day after the birth, was, in the mean time, an indelible mark upon their flesh of the promise of God concerning their future destination, having been appointed for that particular purpose, viz. a token of the covenant of God with their illustrious ancestor Abraham. Whether this rite was borrowed from this patriarch, as was that of the Arabs (many of whom were descended from him) or adopted from some idea of purity, as it probably was, by the Egyptian priests, it had no such object with them as it had with the Hebrews. For the promise of God to Abraham was expressly confined to his son Isaac, and afterwards to the posterity of Jacob.

17. Had Moses borrowed any thing from the heathens, he could not have overlooked the various modes of *divination*, *forcery*, and *witchcraft*, their omens of a thousand kinds, their rites for consulting the dead in the art of *necromancy*, their distinction of days into lucky and unlucky; which constituted a great part of the religious observances of all the heathen nations, civilized, or uncivilized. The Romans had even an order of priests called *Augurs*, whose sole business it was to observe the flight of birds, and to make prognostications from them. But so far are we from finding any thing of this kind in the books of Moses, of which
those

those of the Hindoos are full, that they are spoken of with the greatest contempt and abhorrence, and the pretenders to them are directed to be put to death.

18. The general system of *civil government* laid down in the institutions of Moses, is fundamentally different from any thing that he could have seen, or heard of, in his time, and infinitely more favourable to personal liberty and happiness.

In the time of Moses all the neighbouring countries of any note were governed by *kings*, whose will, as far as appears, was the only law. But the government instituted by Moses was a government of *fixed laws*, and those laws reduced to *writing*, so that they could not but have been universally known; and nothing was left to the arbitrary will of any man, whatever office he might hold in the state.

There were no *written laws*, at least in the western part of the world, prior to those of Moses; so that in this he set a noble example to the world. If those of the Hindoos were prior to his, he could not have known any thing of them; and they are (as I have shewn at large, in a work of which this was the sole object) the very reverse of those of Moses; being evidently calculated, as Sir Wm. Jones has justly observed, to throw all power into the hands of the prince and the priests, while the rest of the nation were kept in ignorance and slavery.

In the institutions of Moses there is no provision for a king, whose powers should descend to his posterity. Judges only, such as Joshua, and others, were appointed

as particular occasions required ; but their posterity sunk into the class of common citizens, those of Joshua, under whom they conquered their country, as well as the rest.

As, however, a deviation from their original constitution was foreseen, provision was made for it ; and among other guards against the abuses of hereditary power, the king was required to write with his own hand a copy of the laws, by which both he and the rest of the nation were to be governed ; and tho' the nation was clamorous for a king, in order to be like their neighbours, they never presumed to appoint one themselves, but received without hesitation those that were appointed by God, as Saul and David, and these were never considered in any other light than as his lieutenants ; nor did any king of Judah, even the most addicted to idolatry, make any alteration in the civil constitution, or laws, of the kingdom.

It has been said by unbelievers, that the kings were in fact appointed by the *priests*. But then the priests would have derived some advantage from it, whereas there is not, in all the history of the Hebrew nation, any example of a priest arriving at any considerable degree of civil power, or of their gaining any privilege whatever of which they were not possessed before there were kings. In the time of the Maccabees, indeed, the high priests became kings ; but this was a system essentially different from that of Moses, nor was it of long continuance. No two classes of men were more different from each other than the *Bramins* among the *Hindos*, and the order of *priests* among the Israelites ;

and

and therefore they must have been constructed on very different and opposite principles. The slightest attention to the two systems must make this evident to the most prejudiced.

The whole tribe of Levi, including the priests, were dispersed among the twelve, and lived under the government of the other tribes, without any power civil or military ; and the number of cities allotted to them, and the ground allowed them contiguous to them for gardens, and other necessary uses, were so strictly defined, that it could never be in their power to acquire landed property, and the influence annexed to it.

19. If Moses had borrowed his religious institutions from Egypt, or any other nation, he would probably have adopted some of their *civil* laws, as those relating to persons, property, &c. But we find in the civil laws of Moses several, and those of particular importance, of which we see no resemblance in those of any other nation, antient or modern ; tho' had they been found among those of Solon, Lycurgus, in Indostan, or in China, they would have been admired for their peculiar excellence.

The cities of refuge have been mentioned, as compared with the unlimited right of asylum attached to the temples of the heathens ; and this may be considered as a religious as well as a civil institution. But the privileges of the *sabbatical year*, and of the *Jubilee*, are wholly of a civil nature ; and they must have been an admirable security for personal liberty, and the property of families. No Hebrew could bind himself for servitude more than seven years, nor could he alienate
his

his landed property for more than fifty. No gift or sale could have any effect beyond this term, which was fixed for the whole nation, and did not commence at the time of every particular bargain. In consequence of this, tho' a family might suffer by the imprudence, or extravagance of the head of it, the evil had a limit ; for at the Jubilee all estates reverted to their original proprietors.

By this means, too, *political liberty* would be better guarded ; as it would make it impossible for any man to acquire much landed property, or the influence attached to it. And as the Israelites were also prohibited from making interest of their money, they could not make any accumulation of wealth of any kind. The laws of Moses relating to theft, robbery, and personal injuries, are by no means the same with those of other nations, and they are all admirable for their equity. The abominable vices of sodomy and bestiality, are punishable with death by the laws of Moses, but not, I believe, by those of any other legislator ; and they are eminently calculated to preserve the dignity, and prevent the degradation, of human nature.

In short, no person can peruse the laws of Moses without acknowledging them to be truly *original*, and their superiority to those of other antient nations, the most famed for their wisdom, is an evidence of their divine origin.

20. In all antient nations there were trials by various *ordeals*, in which the accused person was supposed to be guilty, unless fire or water did not injure him. In

no system is more account made of these ordeals than in that of the Hindoos, in which it is declared to be more to be depended upon than any other evidence, being imagined to be that of the gods themselves.

In the institutions of Moses we find one trial by ordeal; but so essentially different from any that was in use in other countries, that it could never have been borrowed from them. This was in the case of a wife suspected of adultery; and recourse was had to it only in defect of any other evidence. To satisfy the jealous husband in this case the wife was made to drink a quantity of water, in which was put some dust from the ground, and the scrapings of a writing containing a denunciation of divine judgments to be instantly inflicted in case she was guilty. But besides that recourse was had to this mode of trial only in defect of proper evidence, all that can be objected to it is that the guilty might escape unhurt; whereas in all the heathen ordeals the accused might suffer tho' ever so innocent, since nothing but a miracle could protect him. The difference is, therefore, manifestly in favour of the institution of Moses; and so great, that the one could not have been borrowed from the other.

It may now, surely, be concluded from this general view of the subject (and the comparison might have been extended to many more particulars) that the two systems, viz, that of *Moses*, and that of the *heathens*, were not derived from each other; and the superiority of that of Moses is so great, that considering his circumstances, and those of his nation at the time, we cannot

cannot err in pronouncing, that they could not have had any human, but must have had a divine, origin. Nor can any thing be said of Mr. Langles, and others, who assert that the books of Moses were copied, or in any other way derived, from the works of other eastern nations, more favourable than that they had never read them.

NOTES

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

J O S H U A.

JOSHUA succeeding Moses in his authority over the people, having been his constant attendant, and perhaps his amanuensis, would naturally follow his example in recording the memorable events of his time, especially as they were in continuation of those of Moses, and it would appear equally necessary. An account of the division of the land of Canaan among the different tribes must have appeared to be particularly so, as a record for future ages. The Jews have always considered this book as written by Joshua, or by his direction, and it has every internal mark of authenticity, in the mention of so many particulars of persons, times, and places. Like the books of Moses, and those of all the antients, it is written in the third person; and a few circumstances have, as was natural, been added by those who copied it afterwards. This book contains the history of the Israelites from the death of Moses to that of Joshua, a period, it is supposed, of near thirty years.

Ch. I. 1. It does not appear in what manner God revealed himself to Joshua, but it was probably in an articulate voice, in the presence of Eleazar the high-priest, agreeably to the directions that he had received Num. xxvii, 21.

4. The *Great Sea* means the Mediterranean, which was great with respect to any other with which the Israelites were acquainted.

8. This circumstance makes it probable that Joshua attended at the sanctuary to receive directions from God, the book of the law being kept there.

18. As there was no person set up in opposition to Joshua, the people, disposed as they always were to rebel, must have had very satisfactory evidence of his having had a divine appointment to succeed Moses, especially as he was of the tribe of Ephraim, and not that of Judah, which only had the promise of pre-eminence.

Ch. II. This must have been some time before the events related in this chapter. This Rahab is generally called a harlot, perhaps because women who kept these places of entertainment generally were of that character, whether they were so or not.

6. This woman must have managed with great address in concealing these spies, and it must have been a very hazardous undertaking. This alone shews the great apprehension of the success of the Israelites in their invasion of the country. Had this woman had any hopes of the city holding out against them, she would, no doubt, have been the first to give information of them, as it is evident she was, by some means or other, well acquainted with their business.

11. This is a very natural account of the terror with which the people in general were struck, as was foretold by Moses, *Exod. xv. 14—15*, on account of the wonderful interposition of God in favour of the Israelites; especially their recent conquest of the Amorites on the other side of Jordan. And as these Amorites had effected the conquest of all the plain country belonging to the Moabites and Ammonites, they were probably the most powerful and warlike of that nation, which appears to have been the most considerable of all the inhabitants of Canaan.

13. She does not appear to have had any husband, which makes it more probable that she was a harlot.

14. As all these nations were devoted to destruction, it does not appear on what authority they could answer for the preservation of any person of that race. It must probably have been understood that, notwithstanding the order for their extirpation, it was, on the supposition of their obstinate resistance; and that had they, like this woman, submitted, and renounced their idolatry, they would have been spared as she was. But the account of their treaty of the Gibeonites is unfavourable to this hypothesis.—From the conferences which these spies held with this woman, and their meeting no difficulty in traversing the country, it is evident that the language spoken in it was properly Hebrew.

Ch. III. 1. At Shittim they had been two months, from the first of the eleventh month of the fortieth year from their leaving Egypt. The sense will be much clearer if the verses be read in the following order, recommended by Houbigant, viz, 1, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 2, 3, 4, 6, 14, &c.

3. On this solemn occasion the ark was carried not by the Levites, as in their journeying through the wilderness, but by the priests. The same was done when it was carried round Jericho, when Zadoc and Abiathan brought it back to Jerusalem at the time that David fled from Abolom (2 Sam. xv. 29) and when it was lodged in the temple of Solomon (1 Kings, viii, 6) the Levites not being allowed to go into the sanctuary.

4. The reason for keeping this distance between the ark and the people was both out of reverence for it, and that the people might the better see how to direct their march. For that was to be their guide to the proper place for passing the river.

16. This miracle was in some respects more extraordinary than that of passing through the Red Sea, as in this case it could not be pretended that the water had retired from any natural cause. If they passed this river at all, without bridges or boats, the current of the water must have been miraculously suspended.

17. They kept, no doubt, at a proper distance from the ark, marching above and below the place where it stood.

Ch. IV. 9. This may be rendered twelve stones *cut the middle of Jordan*, viz. the same that had been mentioned before, tho' it is generally supposed that besides these, other twelve stones were set up in the river. The circumstance of their remaining to this day might be added when the book was copied in a later period, or by Joshua himself before he died.

19. As the Israelites left Egypt on the 15th day of
this

this month, there wanted five days of forty years from that time.

23. This passage through the river Jordan being here said to have been in the same manner with that through the Red sea, shews that the waters of that sea were actually divided like those of this river, and that they did not merely retire from the shore, as some have supposed.

Ch. V. 1. It appears from this that there were Amorites on the West side of Jordan, as well as on the East, where they had made a conquest of part of the country of the Moabites and Ammonites.—I ho' all the seven devoted nations were descended from Canaan the son of Ham, the term *Canaanites* was at this time appropriated to the inhabitants of the northern parts of Palestine, on the sea coast. Perhaps other families had so distinguished themselves as to have obtained different appellations, as *Amorites*, *Hittites* &c. whereas these had not, and therefore continued to be called, as they all had originally been, *Canaanites*. Or this term may have some allusion to their occupation as *traders*, as the word imports. Living on the sea coast, they probably applied to navigation.

That the people of this country should have been so much alarmed, and dispirited, at the miraculous passage of the river Jordan was natural. It is rather extraordinary that they did not immediately make their submission, or leave the country. But we often see that, in a state of great terror, persons are incapable of taking wise measures, and often continue a long time in a state of stupid irresolution and inactivity. They

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might

might still hope that the gods of their country might be able to protect them from the invaders, tho' they had not prevented their passing the river.

7. This circumcision of the Israelites immediately on their setting foot in the enemies country, and their consequently incapacitating themselves for making any resistance in case of an attack, implies the most perfect confidence in the protection of God. Had the people of the country been apprized of their situation, and not been overawed by the recent event of the passage of the river, they would, no doubt, have taken that opportunity to fall upon them.—As the Israelites in their passage through the wilderness must sometimes have continued a long time in the same place, the reason why this rite of circumcision was discontinued among them does not sufficiently appear. The operation might have been performed with safety, even on a march. The sons of Moses were circumcised at an inn. Besides women were delivered of children in the wilderness, and there would seem to be more hazard in this than in circumcising them.

9. With the Israelites *uncircumcised* was a term of reproach, and tho' the Egyptian priests were circumcised the people in general were not. As the promise of the land of Canaan was made to Abraham on the express condition of his posterity being circumcised, this rite might be considered as absolutely necessary on their taking possession of the country, and becoming a free and independant nation. This is thought by some to be the meaning of the passage. They could not now be reproached, as they had been by the Egyptians, with
being

being a nation of slaves, *Gilgal* comes from a word which signifies to *roll away*.

11. That is on the 15th day of the month.

12. It is evident from this that manna must have been a supernatural production. It had fallen even in the land of Canaan, but wholly ceased from this time, when they had no farther occasion for it.

15. This appearance, whatever it was, was no doubt, intended to encourage Joshua; but whether it was a permanent being, or not, is uncertain. By Joshua's being ordered to put off his shoes, we seem to be authorized to conclude that it was such an appearance as that to Moses at the bush, which tho' it is called an *angel*, the voice proceeding from it was that of the Supreme Being.

Ch. VI. 2. The people of Jericho depended on the strength of their walls, and would think it extraordinary that the Israelites should only march round them in this formal procession, without making any attempt to demolish them, or get over them.

4. As ram's horns are not hollow, and therefore a trumpet could not be made of them, these must have been made of metal, and only twisted, so as to resemble ram's horns.

5. There must have been an exception in favour of that part of the wall on which the house of Rahab stood; and this would still more distinguish this house from any other.

15. As there was no intermission of this compassing of the city during seven successive days, and this was

done by the divine order, an exception must on this occasion have been made to the rest on the sabbath day.

17. All the inhabitants of the country were devoted to destruction; but in this case the city itself, and every thing contained in it was devoted, as the first fruits of the country, nothing of it being reserved for the use of the conquerors.

20. Nothing could have been more evidently miraculous than this. An earthquake might have destroyed the walls of the city, but then it would have been miraculous indeed if the destruction had extended no farther. The city itself was not injured, nor did any of the besiegers suffer.

26. The meaning must be, that when he laid the foundation of the city his eldest son should die, and then the rest in order to the youngest, when the whole should be accomplished. And this actually came to pass in the reign of Ahab, 1 Kings xvi. 34.

Ch. VII. 4. That the inhabitants of Ai should venture to attack even a small body of the Israelites, after the taking of Jericho in so extraordinary a manner, is not easily accounted for. They might have been deceived by their priests, and by omens, on which the heathens always laid the greatest stress. They were also, no doubt, encouraged by seeing so small a number of the enemy.

5. It is evident that the Israelites would never have had the courage to make this invasion of the land of Canaan, when they were so much disheartened at this slight repulse.

9. There seems to have been too great freedom in this expostulation with the Supreme Being. But
Moses

Moses, on a similar occasion, had used the same language. Prayer in general is founded on the condescension of God to the weakness of man ; and every allowance will, no doubt, be made for the degree of this weakness.

18. In 1. Chron. ii. 9. the name is *Achar*. It is the same in the LXX, in other ancient versions, and in Josephus. It is therefore probable that this was the real name, especially as *Achar* and not *Achan*, has the signification here alluded to.

Why the Divine Being should have been displeased with the Israelites in general on account of the offence of this Achan, does not appear. But this is only one case of many in which numbers suffer for the crimes of one, or a few ; and therefore it must be agreeable to the general plan of divine providence.

20. This detection of the criminal by open lot was the clearest proof of God being with this people, and attentive to all their conduct. It would, therefore, operate both as a motive to the exact performance of every thing that was enjoined them, and an encouragement to confide in the divine protection.

21. It is possible that, as Babylon appears from other accounts to have been the centre of a considerable trade, this Babylonish garment might be one that had been brought from that place, but manufactured in India, which was in very early times famous for its manufactures, as it is at this day. If this wedge of gold weighed fifty shekels, it was worth three hundred dollars;

23. It is probable that all the family of Achan was privy to this concealment. Indeed, it could hardly have been buried in the tent without their concurrence. This however, on the contrary supposition, is the only case out of many, in which children suffer for the sins of their parents ; and it is calculated to have a good effect.

Ch. VIII. 2. Ai was treated as the rest of the conquered country. Every human being was put to death, but the spoil was reserved for the conquerors.

3. It is supposed that this number should have been *three thousand*, as *thirty thousand* was much too large a number for an ambuscade.

7. Tho' assured of victory, from the express promise of God, he made use of such means as a knowledge of the art of war directed him to.

11. The distance between Gilgal and Ai was about nine miles.

13. The most genuine copy of the LXX instead of this verse, has these words at the head of v. 12. " But the ambush was on the West side of the city," which removes a great difficulty occasioned by the supposition of two ambushes. Houbigant inserts part of v. 12 in v. 13, and reads thus, " Joshua took about five thousand men, and went that night into the midst of the valley."

17. The people of Bethel must have come to the assistance of those of Ai, and have arrived before any part of the army of Israel. For the ambush was between Bethel and Ai. But the clause " nor in Bethel," is wanting

wanting in the LXX, and therefore may be an interpolation.

18. This is supposed to have been a signal for the liars in wait to enter the city. But unless there had been a flag annexed to the spear, it could not have been seen at that distance.

25. This must have been an inconsiderable city to have had a king of its own ; for according to the usual proportion of men capable of bearing arms to the rest, it could not have mustered more than three thousand men.

30. In *mount Gerizim*. SAMARITAN CHRONICLE.

This could not have been done at this time, tho' it is related in this place. For mount Ebal was situated very near to mount Gerizim, in a part of the country very distant from that in which they then were, and which they had not conquered. Joshua, however, no doubt, complied with the directions of Moses on this subject, Deut. xxvii. 2. &c. Dr. Geddes removes this whole account to Ch. 18. and places it after v. 1.

34. It is pretty evident from this that all that was written upon the stones were the blessings and curses from Deut 27. These comprized the most essential part of the law. Much more could not have written in this manner.

Ch. IX. 2. The whole of this part of the country, including Gibeon, seems to have rejected all offers of peace or submission, at least in effect, by making an armed opposition.

3. The Gibeonites probably withdrew privately from the general confederacy ; but having concurred in the hostile

tile measures that had at first been adopted, they were not intitled to any benefit from their submission.

6. They must have heard of the general order to spare none of those nations that were then in possession of the land of Canaan; but that they might make leagues of amity with people out of its bounds. No artifice could have been better conducted than this was.

10. They make no mention of the more recent events of the taking of Jericho and Ai, as they would not have it supposed that they had heard of them before they set out.

13. Their bottles were of leather, and therefore liable to be torn and perish.

17. The three first of these places fell to the tribe of Benjamin, and the last to that of Judah.

23. They were not distributed to the people at large, as domestic slaves, but made subject to do the servile work of the tabernacle and temple, to which the Levites were originally bound. Being in this, as it were *given* to the Levites, as their assistants, they were probably the same that were afterwards called *Nethenim*, which has that signification, and they are mentioned with commendation in the course of the history.

It appears that before the erection of the temple the tabernacle had been removed to Gibeon from Shiloh. Maimonides says it was at Nob before it was at Gibeon, and that in both these places together it remained fifty seven years. As Gibeon was one of the cities that were given to the priests, the inhabitants were probably removed to the cities of the Levites, and served with them at the sanctuary in their turns.

Ch. X. 2. Gibeon appears to have been governed by elders, and not by a king, tho' it was as considerable as the cities which had kings.

3. These were the principal cities in the South of Palestine, and they all fell to the lot of Judah.

5. Hebron had belonged to the Hittites ; but the Amorites had probably conquered it as well as Gibeon. For the Gibeonites were originally Hivites (Ch. ix. 17) they are said (2 Sam. xxi. 2) to be the remains of the Amorites.

As the inhabitants of Ai had defeated a party of the Israelites, these people might think them not to be in all cases invincible ; and every thing being at stake, they would encourage one another not to yield without a contest. They might also hope to overpower the Gibeonites before they could be assisted by their new allies.

10. This attack being sudden and unexpected, would contribute much to their defeat. Bethaven was not then built, but only afterwards by Sherah, as we read 1 Chron. vii. 14. These places were to the South of Gibeon, and Bethhoron was to the North, so that they fled in different directions.

Sometimes stones are taken up by whirlwinds, and fall at a great distance from the place from which they were taken. But of late it is undeniable that stones have fallen upon the earth from the highest regions of the atmosphere, without any whirlwind to take them up, and have sunk deep into the earth. The most probable conjecture concerning them is that they come from the moon, thrown by volcanoes within the sphere of the attraction of the earth.

14. As this battle probably began at the break of day, for they had marched all the night ; and as no more was done than might have been accomplished in a day, some think that the day was not prolonged in any supernatural manner, but that the account is taken from the poetical composition here referred to, and that the language was only figurative, the meaning of the prayer being that God would enable him to complete the defeat of the enemy in that day. Indeed, it could hardly have occurred to any man to pray that the day might really be longer than usual. An idea of so very extraordinary a nature as that of the sun's standing still could hardly have occurred to any man. The dividing of the Red sea was not a thing that Moses had thought of; and both the dividing of the river Jordan, and the falling of the walls of Jericho, were announced by God himself to Joshua. He had not presumed to request any such things. Still less is it probable that he would in earnest have desired that the sun and moon might stand still.

As the army had marched all the night, they could not have supported the fighting and the active pursuit of the enemy a day more without another miracle, for which there was no occasion. There is no mention made of this greatest of all miracles in the book of psalms, where almost all the other miracles in favour of the nation are enumerated, or alluded to. The prophet Habakkuk, indeed, says *the sun and moon stood still in their habitation*. But this may be no other than such poetical language as the book of this prophet abounds with, or it may be an allusion to the poetical book of

Jasher

Jasher here mentioned; which seems to have been a miscellaneous collection of poems, since David's lamentation over Saul and Jonathan was in it, 2. Sam. i. 18.

I see no other material objection to this particular miracle, which does not require that the sun or the earth should actually have stood still, but only that the day should have been prolonged in that place.

15. This verse is not in the common copies of the LXX. The same words occur verse 43, where they are in their place. At this time the army could not have returned to Gilgal. This verse Mr. Pilkington thinks is probably interpolated from v. 43.

16. Palestine abounds in caves, in which great numbers of persons may conceal themselves. Both David and Saul with many of their followers, did so in a cave at Engeddi.

20. *In peace*, means, in safety, or without any loss, that is, of those who had been sent in the pursuit.

33. Gezer was afterwards in the tribe of Ephraim, not far from Gibeon, as may be inferred from 1 Chron. xiv, 16.

41. This was in the Southern extremity of Palestine, from near to which place the spies had been sent by Moses. This Goshen was in the tribe of Judah, and was perhaps so called on account of its excellent pastures. Dr. Geddes thinks that this was the same with the country of the Geshurites, mentioned Ch. xii, 2.

Ch. XI. 1. This place was in the most northern part of the country, near the source of Jordan.

4. These nations formed a much more considerable armament than the kings of the Southern part of the country

country had done, and they were the more formidable as the Israelites had neither horses nor chariots. These princes might hope for better success than those in the South, who thinking to have to do only with the city of Gibeon, had not brought their armed chariots, and were moreover, taken by surprise.

3. This was near the springs of Jordan, and was called Samochonites, from the abundance of fishes in it.

7. He did not wait to be attacked, but came upon them by surprise, as he had done when he defeated the kings of the South.

11. This was afterwards rebuilt by the Canaanites, and another king of the same name, Jabin, reigned there. Jud. iv. 2.

13. *That stood in Jalam*, the name of a district. P.

17. This is an account of the whole extent of the country, North and South.

18. It was six years before the war was completely finished.

20. We may perhaps infer from this, that had it not been for their obstinacy in opposing the Israelites their lives would have been spared. Their case was the same with that of Pharaoh; there having been no supernatural influence on their minds. They were left to their own natural pride and violence.

21. Debir was also called Kirjath Sepher.

22. The Anakims were a gigantic race.

Ch. XII. 8. *In the plains and in the groves.* MSS.

24. Several of the places here mentioned do not occur any where else, and many of them must have been inconsiderable, tho' like Ai they had kings. The towns
being

being walled shews that they were frequently at war with each other. This division of the country into small states prevailed in all parts of the antient world, as Greece, Italy, Gaul, and Britain. The same is the present state of North America.

Ch. XIII. 2. The Philistines were not of the antient inhabitants of Canaan, being descended from Misraim, the second son of Ham; but their country is to make a part of the possession of the Israelites after their restoration.

3. Sihor was a small rivulet from one of the branches of the Nile. The Avites were mixed with the Philistines, and were part of the antient inhabitants of the country.

4. The Amorites were both in the Northern and Southern parts of the country, as well as on the East of Jordan, whence they had driven the Moabites and Ammonites.

5. The Giblites were the inhabitants of Gebal, near to Tyre and Sidon, as appears from Ez. xxvii, 9, and 1 Kings, v. 18. They are mentioned as stone cutters, sent by Hiram king of Tyre to Solomon.

6. Tyre and Sidon were not conquered by the Israelites, but will be within their territory after their restoration.

9. *And the cities.* CONJ. HO.

19. *In the mount, and in the valley.* SYR.

25. This is part of the country which was conquered from them by the Amorites, and reconquered by the Israelites.

Ch. XIV. 6. He is called a Kenezite, probably because descended from one Kenez, the head of a family.

10. According to this five years only had then been employed in the conquest of the country.

13. That is, the country about it, for the city was given to the priests, as it is expressly said Ch. xxi, 11.

15. *The city of Arba*, as it is in Ch. xv. 13, and xxi, 11.

Ch. XV. 1. The tribe of Judah had the greatest part of the South of the country, and the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh that of the North.

6. What is meant by this stone is uncertain. It is mentioned again Ch. xviii, 17. Being a Reubenite, he could not have had any inheritance on this side of Jordan. Perhaps he had died and was buried there.

8. This was a place near Jerusalem, through which ran the brook Kedron. This Hinnom, from whom this valley had its name, had probably been the owner of it in some early time. It was afterwards infamous for the idolatrous rites that were practised in it. Jebus was afterwards taken by David, and called mount Zion, and was part of the city of Jerusalem.

15. Kirjath Sepher is also called Kirjath Sanna, which in Arabic signifies learning or law; as *Sepher* signifies *book*. It was, therefore, probably a place in which records were antiently kept.

17. Kenaz was the father of Othniel, so that he and Ackfah had not the same father, tho' they were nearly related, which is all that the term *brother* often signifies.

19. The land to the South was probably hot and dry.

32. All the places mentioned above are thirty eight. But perhaps only twenty-nine of them deserved to be called

called cities. The same observation may apply to other places that are here enumerated.

59. Between this verse and the next add from the **LXX**, *Theco, and Ephratha (that is Bethlehem) and Phagar, and Etan, and Kulon and Tatam, and Thobes, and Karam, and Galam, and Thether, and Mancho, eleven towns and their villages.*

63. From this it is evident that this book was written before the time of David, who took this city from the Jebusites.

Ch. XVI. 2. Bethel was a place in the fields, near to the city of Luz.

8. The brook Kanah was perhaps the same with Cherith. But if the sea here mentioned be the Mediterranean, this is not probable. In the Vulgate it is the Salt sea.

10. As it is not said that the Ephraimites did wrong in accepting the submission of these people, the submission of other inhabitants of the country might have availed them as much. And some suppose that because the Gergashites are not mentioned in the account of the conquest of the country, and yet were there in the time of our Saviour, they had submitted and been spared. But it seems that tho' it was irregular, the Israelites did receive the submission of some who dwelt at the extremity of the country, because they were not able to conquer them.

Ch. XVII. 1 Being a warrior, he could better defend a frontier country.

11. The different tribes were in several places intermixed.

18. It is evident that much of the country was then a forest, and uninhabited, tho' the rest was so populous. It also appears that tho' in the first settlement of the country the hand of God was visibly with them, and eminently contributed to the defeat of their enemies, it was withdrawn by degrees; and the people, being numerous and warlike, were left to themselves.

Ch. XVIII. 1 This was, no doubt, by divine appointment; for they were to set up the tabernacle in the place which God should chuse, Deut. xii, 15. Shiloh was in the tribe of Ephraim, and near the centre of the country.

9. They must have made a map of the country.

28 The northern part of the city, including mount Moriah, belonged to Benjamin; but the southern part to Judah.

Ch. XIX. 27 As Dagon was worshipped by the Philistines in the South, and no doubt in this place, called after the same deity, in the Northern part of the country, this worship must have been very extensive. It is commonly supposed to have been the same with *Astarte*, called also the *Syrian goddess*. But as Dagon is in the masculine gender, this is not so probable.

28. This was not the Cana in Galilee, where Jesus afterwards was, but another place of the same name near to Sidon, called the *Greater Cana*.

29. It does not appear that the Tyre which was afterwards so famous for its commerce and power was built so early as the time of Joshua; and as the name signifies a *rock* or *fortress*, this may have been some other place of strength.

34 This

34. This tribe could not be near to that of Judah, several others lying between them ; but there is no mention of Judah in the LXX, or the Chaldee.

35 This was on the sea of Galilee, the same with the sea of Genesareth, so often mentioned in the Gospel history.

After this verse insert the following from many MSS. *And out of the tribe of Reuben, a city of refuge for the man-slayer, Bezer in the wilderness with her suburbs, Kedemoth with her suburbs, and Mephaath with her suburbs, four cities. K.*

40. Some of these places were mentioned as in the tribe of Judah, within the boundary of which this tribe had its inheritance. This being found not sufficient for them, they afterwards sent out a colony to the northern part of the country, and there got possession of Leshem, or Laish, and gave it the name of Dan, as in v. 47. Hence the phrase *from Dan to Beersheba*, signifying the whole extent of the country, from the most northerly to the most southerly part of it.

46 This Jephthah was afterwards called Joppa, and was the principal sea port on that coast.

50. Joshua does not appear to have made any great provision for his own family ; which, indeed, is never mentioned ; so far was he from providing any considerable establishment for himself, or requiring any prerogative for his great services. In this he resembled Moses.

Ch. XX. 7 These cities, besides being conveniently situated, and at a proper distance from each other, are said to have been on eminences ; so that

they could be seen at a distance, which was a farther advantage to a person fleeing to them.

Ch. XXI. 1 Tho' the tribe of Levi had no separate inheritance in the land, they seem to have had a sufficient proportion of the cities and suburbs, for their habitations and for their cattle. Corn they could not raise.

45 As every thing that had been promised by God to the Israelites was fulfilled in the time of Joshua, there cannot be a doubt but that the still more glorious things that are foretold concerning them, will have their accomplishment in due time.

Ch. XXII. 3 It is thought that they had continued with their brethren about seven years.

8 Tho' they had served so long, absent from their wives and children, it was not without a recompence, as they had their share of the spoil, which must have been very considerable. It is probable too, that as every man capable of bearing arms was not wanted for this service, and some must have been at home, they had served on this side Jordan in their turns.

11 It seems extraordinary, considering the small extent of the country, that they should not have had a more certain account of this transaction, and the real motives of it, before they took the serious measures that are here mentioned.

19 The country originally promised to the posterity of Abraham, as that for which God had a particular favour, was that which lay to the West of Jordan. They might, therefore imagine that, living on the other side of that river, they would not be equally under the divine protection.

27. Erections in the form of altars, in commemoration of remarkable events, were common in antient times. Indeed, any form of a solid building, large or small, and that did not terminate in a point, might be called *an altar*, because sacrifices might be made upon it.

33. The LXX say that it was Joshua who gave this name to the altar. But his name not being mentioned in the preceding account of the transaction, it is evident that when the war was over he did not retain any civil power, but returned to the rank of a common citizen.

Ch. XXIII. 9 This was a proof of the superiority of their God to those of these nations.

14. Solomon made the same acknowledgment, 1 Kings, viii, 56.

15 This has been verified in the fullest extent, in consequence of the apostacy of the people from their religion.

Ch. XXIV. 1 The LXX and the Arabic versions have *Shiloh* in this place.

2 This is the only account that we have of the family of Abraham having actually been idolatrous.

12 This was particularly promised Exod. xxiii, 27, Deut. vii, 20, and here it is said to have been performed, tho' nothing is said of this circumstance in the preceding history of the war. The LXX has *twelve kings*, omitting the mention of Sihon and Og.

14 Joshua, no doubt, knew of the idolatrous practices which had been used in the wilderness, and he might well presume they were still practised in secret by

some of the people. But tho' they had in some measure conformed to the religion of the Egyptians while they resided among them, they had not done so in all respects, as appears by their longing for the leeks and the onions they had eaten in Egypt; and from these the Egyptians religiously abstained.

19 *Cease not to serve Jehovah. H.*

It was very proper to apprize the people of the character of the God whom they declared they would serve, since he was very unlike the gods of the heathens, who tolerated the worship of each other. On the contrary, if they served Jehovah, they must serve him *only*, which was contrary to the maxims of the heathens in general.

25. This solemn promise and engagement is called *a covenant*, and was a renewal of that which was entered into in the time of Moses. Here the LXX has *Shiloh*.

This was probably a pillar that might remain to posterity, as a memorial of the solemn transaction. In Jud. ix, 6, mention is made of the pillar in Shechem.

26 It is evident from this that Joshua was a writer as well as Moses, and he, no doubt, wrote the greatest part of this book which bears his name. And this book of Joshua, as well as those of Moses, might in a certain sense be called the *book of the law of God*, as containing a continuation of the history of the transactions of God with the nation, and the orders that were given in his time.

29. As no mention is any where made of the age of Joshua when he left Egypt, tho' he must have been more than twenty, the length of his life cannot be ascertained. Since he was forty years in the wilderness, sup-
posing

posing him to have been thirty at that time, as he was called a young man, he must have lived forty in the land of Canaan.

In the Vatican copy of the LXX there is this addition, "They put with him into the sepulchre the knives of flint with which he circumcised the children of Israel in Gilgal, when he brought them out of Egypt, as the Lord commanded them ; and they are there unto this day."

31. This verse could not have been written by Joshua, any more than the last chapter of Deuteronomy by Moses. But this is no objection to the authenticity of the rest of the book, it being natural for any transcriber of sufficient information to add such circumstances as these, in order to make the work complete, and for the farther information of posterity. It is generally thought that Samuel wrote this addition to the book of Joshua, as well as the book of Judges.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

J U D G E S.

THIS book has its name from its containing the history of transactions during the government of the Israelites by temporary judges, before that of kings, from the death of Joshua to the time of Samuel, who is with pretty good reason thought to have been the writer of this book. It was evidently written before the taking of Jerusalem by David, as may be inferred from Ch. i, 21. As this book was always received by the Jews as an authentic history, and the contents of it are alluded to in other books of unquestionable authority, there cannot be any good reason for entertaining a doubt concerning it at this day. It comprizes the history of about three hundred years, and all the facts recorded in it are of so remarkable a nature, that they could not have been forgotten in the time of Samuel, even if there had been no public record of any of them, when they took place. But since both Moses and Joshua were writers, and composed the history of their times, it cannot be supposed but that the high-

high-priests at least would see that the history was continued in the same authentic manner.

This history abundantly verifies the frequent warnings and predictions of Moses, according to which the people, being under the more immediate government of God, were in the most exemplary manner to be rewarded for their obedience, and punished for their disobedience, and especially for their conformity to the religions of their neighbours, whom God had devoted to destruction, on account of their polytheism and idolatry.

Ch. I. 1. In this conduct they followed the directions given by Moses, according to the original principles of their government; the high-priest, in the presence of the chief magistrate, asking directions from God, and receiving an answer in an articulate voice. Perhaps the power of the Amorites, Hittites, and other nations, being now broken, those names were no more used; but the remains of them were called *Canaanites* as before. For here the people to the South, as well as those in the North, are called by this name.

2. This is the first time that we find the tribe of Judah distinguished in this manner. They were the most numerous and powerful of all the tribes, and according to the prediction of Jacob were to have the pre-eminence of all the others.

4. Bezeck was in the tribe of Judah, not far, it is thought, from Jerusalem.

7. The Israelites had, no doubt, heard of the wanton cruelty which he had exercised towards the kings that he had conquered, and purposely treated him in the same

same manner: The kings he had conquered must have been kings of single towns, or small principalities in his neighbourhood; which shews that the inhabitants of this country had been frequently at war with each other, as, indeed, may be inferred, from the fortification of their towns. It is not said that they put this king to death. That he was spared, as some have supposed, on account of his renouncing idolatry, does not at all appear. This is by no means implied in his acknowledging the justice of *God* in the singular number: for the term *Elohim* is indefinite, and is often applied to the deities of the heathens. Perhaps he died before the sentence of death could be executed upon him; or the Israelites might have relaxed with respect to the rigorous execution of the orders that had been given them to extirpate all the inhabitants.

9. This must mean the mountainous part of the country, and also the vallies within the inheritance of Judah.

10. This part of the country had been conquered by Joshua (Ch. xv, 14) but the old inhabitants must have recovered the possession of it. Or this may be a recapitulation of what was transacted before this time.

12. This history was related before Josh. xv. 16.

16. This *city of palm trees* is Jericho, where the Kenites first settled; but they afterwards removed to the mountainous part of the inheritance of Judah, perhaps because it bore a greater resemblance to their original settlement near mount Sinai.

18. These cities, tho' conquered, were not retained
by

by the Israelites, for we soon find the Philistines in possession of them.

19. *But not to drive out the inhabitants of the valley.* K.

As the Canaanites in the North were conquered by the Israelites, notwithstanding their having armed chariots, it does not appear why those in the South might not have been conquered also, tho' they were possessed of the same advantage. But perhaps, on account of the Israelites beginning to relax with respect to the observance of their law, it pleased God to leave them to themselves, after the greater part of the country was conquered. In this case, particular interpositions were not so necessary as at the first.

21. It appears from this circumstance, that this book was written before David conquered this place.

24. They desired him to shew them where the city might be attacked to the most advantage.

26. This was probably the same place that Josephus calls by this name in Arabia, not far from Judea, whether some of the Hittites had fled on the invasion of the country by Joshua.

27. This was not far from Jordan.

28. In this they acted contrary to the order of God, and no doubt they had at this time begun to relax of the strict observance of their laws in other respects.

34. There appears to have been a want of union in the different tribes after their separate inheritances were allotted to them. Had they all made a common cause, and joined their forces against the old inhabitants

tants, they might, no doubt, have destroyed or expelled them all.

36. Acrabbim is mentioned Josh. xxv. 3. This rock was probably Petra, a city in Arabia. Within those boundaries the Ammonites were confined, and there were remains of this nation, as well as of the Hittites, and other ancient inhabitants of the country, in the time of Solomon, 1 Kings ix. 20—21. There were Gergesenes in the time of our Saviour, Mat. viii. 28. Uriah the husband of Bathsheba was a Hittite. But all these, had, no doubt, renounced idolatry, and conformed to the religion of the Israelites.

Ch. II. 1. Houbigant would place the five first verses after v. 10.

The person, who is here called *an angel* speaks in the name of the Divine Being himself, as he that appeared to Abraham and Moses. It could, therefore, be no other than a temporary representation. The Jews suppose that it was a prophet, as he is said to *come up* from Gilgal, probably to Shiloh, where the people were assembled; but there was nothing peculiar in this. The person who appeared to Abraham came like any other traveller, entered his tent, and was entertained by him. And no prophet, or even an angel, such as appeared to Daniel, ever spake any otherwise than as a messenger from God, and never as the Supreme Being himself.

3. It is evident from this, that disobedience to the divine commands, in not demolishing all the vestiges of idolatry, and making leagues with the ancient inhabi-

tants

tants of the country, preceded their ineffectual attempts to expel them ; and that for this reason they were left to themselves.

6. This must be a recapitulation of what passed in the time of Joshua. For the events related in the preceding chapter were subsequent to his death. This observation was made before, and in the same words, Josh. xxiv. 31. &c.

11. *Baalim* was a general term, to denote the gods of the heathens, the principal of which was the sun, tho' under different names, and worshipped with different rites by different nations.

13. *Ashteroth* was the same with *Astarte*, the Syrian goddess, and the Egyptian *Isis*, representing either the moon, or the powers of nature in general, as acted upon by the sun, and the other heavenly bodies.

15. Thus the threatenings of God by Moses began to be fulfilled ; the people always suffering for their apostacy from their religion, tho' they were never wholly abandoned by God.

23. This frequently repeated apostacy of the Israelites from their religious institutions is a proof that they were such as they would never have adopted of themselves, and which nothing but the most convincing evidence of miracles could have compelled them to receive. This consideration is a strong proof of the divine origin of their religion. The general observations that are made in this place must have been suggested by a view of all the events that are recorded in this book, at whatever time they were written.

Another

Another reason for the Israelites not wholly expelling all the ancient inhabitants of the country was given Exod. xxiii, 29, and Deut. vii, 28, viz. that at first they were not sufficiently numerous to occupy the whole of the country, and therefore the wild beasts would increase upon them. The continuance of some of the ancient inhabitants answered both these purposes. They furnished a proper trial of the obedience of the Israelites, and of their adherence to their own religion ; in which there would have been no merit if they had never seen any other.

Ch. III. 2. This is another reason assigned by the historian why all the ancient inhabitants of the country were not wholly subdued.

3. Three of them had been conquered before. See Josh. xiii, 2—3—Jud. i, 18. But the ancient inhabitants appear to have recovered possession of the country. The Philistines were not of the seven devoted nations. The Canaanites here mentioned were those in the Northern part of the country.

. *Baalim and Ashteroth.* MSS.

8. It does not appear when this subjection of eight years continuance, began or ended.

9. The Israelites had not so far forgotten their own religion, as not to know where to look for assistance in the difficulties into which they had brought themselves. Indeed it does not appear that they ever denied either the divine origin of their religion, or the superiority of their God to those of any other country. But, like the heathens, they thought the worship of other gods was not wholly incompatible with the acknowledgment of their

their own; and the religious festivals of their neighbours, being of a licentious nature, were more pleasing to them than their own.

11. The term of forty years, and also of forty days, frequently occurs in the sacred history, tho' it does not appear that there was any particular reason for that number.

13. This city of palma trees, or Jericho, was next to the land of Moab; but before they could have got possession of it, they must have conquered the country beyond Jordan, which had formerly belonged to them and the Ammonites.

15. The Benjamites being in the neighbourhood of Jericho, would suffer the most by this oppression. Tho' God is said to have *raised up* Ehud, it does not appear that he had any direct commission from God. He may, therefore, have been raised up as any other person by whose means God, in the usual course of his providence, delivers any nation from oppression.

16. It was the custom to hang the sword to the left side, for the greater convenience of laying hold of it with the right hand.

18. Presents are often carried with great parade in the East, many asses, or camels, being employed to carry what one might easily do. So Hazael brought forty camels with his present to Elisha, 2 Kings, viii, 9.

19. This may have been either a quarry of stones, or a stone pillar representing some heathen deity.

20. It appears from this that Eglon had a respect for the God of Israel, by his rising from his seat, which as he was very unwieldy, might be inconvenient to him.

22. There is no occasion for any friend of revelation to defend this act of treachery. The fact is simply related by the historian, without praise or blame. But had the historian praised the action, we should not have been obliged to concur with him in it.

29 These were those Moabites who had settled on the West of the river Jordan, where they had possessed themselves of the city of Jericho.

30. This is so long a period that chronologers interpret it of eighty years after crossing the river Jordan. In the same manner they explain the forty years of rest mentioned v. 11. It may, however, be understood of this part of the country only having been free from any hostile invasion for so long a period, tho' other parts of the country might have suffered in that time from other enemies.

31. Shamgar probably lived in the neighbourhood of the Philistines. An ox-goad in those countries resembles a spear, and is no contemptible weapon. Lycurgus of Thrace in the Grecian history is said to have overthrown the forces of Bacchus with an ox-goad. Shamgar might have been in the field when the Philistines made a foraging incursion into that part of the country, and have been joined by others not better armed than himself.

Ch. IV. 2. This part of the country, had been conquered by Joshua who burned Hazor, (Josh. xi. 10) and slew the king of it, whose name was Jabin; but the place must have been recovered by these Canaanites, who were become powerful, and oppressed the Israelites in the northern parts of the country. For it is evident
that

that in this period of government by judges, all the tribes did not join against any of their enemies, but acted independently of each other.

4. In this general defection God did not wholly desert his people, but occasionally sent them prophets as he had promised. By this prophetess *judging Israel* must be meant that she was so much respected that, in cases of emergency, the people applied to her for advice, and were governed by it, and not that she was regularly invested with any civil authority.

5. She probably sat in judgment under this tree. It may be inferred from the people resorting to her for judgment, that the Sanhedrim, so famous in later times, was not then established; and also that the Mosaic institution of judges was much neglected.

6. This she probably did as divinely inspired, not as having any other authority for what she did.

9. This must have been delivered by the spirit of prophecy.

11. The Kenites lived in tents, and therefore could easily remove from one place to another. They had in general left the neighbourhood of Jericho to reside in the mountainous parts of Judah; but these must have removed farther to the North.

13. These chariots might either have been shod with iron, or wholly made of iron, so that they could not have been burned, or cut in pieces by the enemy.

15. It does not appear in what manner these chariots were made unserviceable. The Israelites had neither chariots, nor horses, to oppose to them.

17. It appears that, tho these Kenites lived among

the Israelites, they were not under their government, but made treaties with other nations independently of them.

19. She gave him milk, which was more refreshing, and more nourishing than water.

21. This was one of the great pins with which tents were fastened to the ground, to keep them steady against the wind. This act of treachery is not to be defended.

24. They pursued their victory till they had reduced the country to the situation in which Joshua had left it.

Ch. V. 1. There is much difficulty in the interpretation of this song, but it evidently abounds with fine images, such as are most admired in compositions of this kind.

4. This recapitulation of the wonderful appearances of God in favour of the Israelites begins with the account of their marching round the land of Edom, which, being a hilly country, is represented as trembling before him, as Sinai had done before.

6. Tho' Shamgar rescued the Israelites from the oppression of the Philistines, the northern parts of the country might even then be under subjection to the Canaanites. Or the meaning may be, that from the time of Shamgar, or from the time that his power was expired, the Israelites fell into this state of oppression.

7. It was not safe to live in unwall'd towns. This exultation of Deborah will be ascribed to pride, but it was natural, and she sufficiently ascribes the glory of all she did to God.

8. The

8. The source of all this calamity was their defecti-
on from their religion.

10. All travelling from place to place, and from one
stage to another, where water was to be had, was un-
safe.

14. This is an enumeration of the forces that joined
in this defeat of the Canaanites. Perhaps the Amale-
kites would have joined the Canaanites, if they had
not been intercepted by the Ephraimites.

16. The Reubenites appear not to have been unani-
mous in this case, the majority of them remaining un-
concerned spectators of the event.

17 Little assistance came from any of the tribes be-
yond Jordan, nor from Dan, whose inheritance was
near Joppa on the Southern sea coast, nor from Asher
on the coast to the North.

18. These two tribes which were the most grievous-
ly oppressed, distinguished themselves the most on this
occasion.

19. Since many single cities had kings, there might
be several of them in league with Jabin, who does not
appear to have been in the battle himself.

20 This is a fine poetical image. As a storm of
thunder and lightning contributed to the defeat of the
Canaanites, the heavenly bodies are represented as en-
gaged in the battle.

23. This must have been some place in the neigh-
bourhood, whose inhabitants did not assist in the war as
might have been expected. Dr. Geddes supposes it
might be the same with *Merom*, mentioned Josh. xi, 5.

24 Whatever obligations the Israelites might be under to this woman, her treachery is not to be commended.

28 This circumstance is finely introduced. He was expected to return victorious, and enriched with plunder of every kind, at the time that he was defeated and slain.

31 *That love thee.* MSS. A. V.

This is a fine conclusion to the song, than which nothing extant of the kind is more excellent.

Ch. VI. These Midianites were the same that had been defeated in the time of Moses, after they had seduced the Israelites to join them in the worship of Baal Peor. Having recovered from this disaster, and become powerful, they engaged the Amalekites and other neighbouring nations, to join them in taking their revenge; and this was the most grievous oppression to which the Israelites had ever been subjected.

3 They ravaged the whole extent of the country from beyond Jordan, the part from which they came, quite to the land of the Philistines on the Mediterranean sea.

5. They took possession of the country, intending to settle in it, after they had destroyed the inhabitants.

10 The effect of this expostulation of the prophet is not mentioned; but it was probably considerable, and in consequence of it God, according to his promise, appeared in their favour.

11. This was in the tribe of Manasseh. There was another Ophrah in the tribe of Benjamin, Josh. xviii 23.

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This threshing wheat in a winepress, and without oxen, shews the extreme oppression they were under.

14 This person called an angel speaks and acts as the Supreme Being, as did the person who appeared to Abraham.

18 He intended to entertain him, as Abraham did his guest.

20 The Syriac translator makes it to be wine for a libation, and not broth.

22 We find it was a general persuasion, that it was dangerous for men, who are sinners, to appear in the presence of superior Beings, probably as those who might punish them.

23 Tho' he saw no person, he heard the same voice, that he had heard before.

24 This altar was not erected for the purpose of sacrifice, but as a monument of the event.

25 This was probably, in a vision.

26 The antient versions have *in order*, i.e. *in an orderly manner*, observing the rules prescribed for the building of altars, one of which was that they were not to be made of hewn stones.

31. There is much difficulty in the rendering of this verse. As the men of the place insisted on the death of the person who had thrown down the altar of Baal, it is not probable that a single man would threaten them with death in return. The meaning therefore probably was, that if Baal was a god, he would himself soon destroy the person who had thus insulted him. Whatever it was that he urged, it appears to have been satis-

factory to the people, as they did not proceed to any violent measure.

33. This was not Jeshreel in the tribe of Judah, but another place of the same name in that of Manasseh, or Issachar, and not far from Ophra, where Gideon lived.

34. It is probable that before this time what has been related concerning the appearance of God to Gideon was generally known.

35. These tribes were all to the North of that of Manasseh. Why he did not send to the tribe of Ephraim, at which they were afterwards offended, does not appear.

40. It seems extraordinary that Gideon should not have been satisfied with the former appearances of God in his favour. This however, is but one instance of many on record of the condescension of God to the weakness of man. This last proof was much more satisfactory than the former. For water might, unseen by him, have been poured upon the fleece, while the ground about it was dry ; but no person could have wetted all the ground in the neighbourhood, while the fleece remained dry.

Ch. VII. 1. This is thought to have been not far from mount Gilboa.

3. It is supposed with great probability that the original reading was *Gilboa*, near to which Gideon then was, whereas Gilead was on the other side of Jordan. The return of so many persons through fear, shews the great dread which the people in general had of the power of the enemy, and at the same time the perfect confidence of the few who remained in the guidance of Gideon,

deon, with whose divine mission, they were, no doubt, acquainted.

5. I do not see any natural reason for giving the preference to those who lapped the water from their hands, above those who lay down to drink. Any other mark of discrimination might, as far as appears, have answered the purpose as well. It was the design of God to make his interposition conspicuous, by shewing that it was in his power to save by a few, as well as by many.

8. They were, no doubt, directed to take all the trumpets of the ten thousand, for the use that was afterwards made of them.

12. Camels were sometimes used in war, as well as horses ; but the greatest use of them was to carry the baggage of the army.

14. This dream was well calculated to answer its purpose, which was to shew with how inconsiderable a means so great an effect as that of the total defeat and dispersion of this immense army would be accomplished. It also shews that the Midianites were not without some fear of Gideon, probably from having heard of the wonderful deliverances of the Israelites on former occasions. We shall see that the Philistines long after this time had the greatest dread of the power of the God of Israel.

19 Every man suddenly producing his lamp, by breaking the pitcher in which it had been concealed, and at the same time blowing his trumpet, and this in the dead of the night, when their numbers could not be discovered, would give the idea of a great army,

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each

each trumpeter generally sufficing for a considerable number of fighting men.

22 They could not, in this state of alarm, distinguish friends from enemies, and fought with one another.

23 It does not appear that the three hundred did much more than excite the alarm which occasioned the dispersion of the army. The slaughter was made by the people of the country rising, and falling upon them on all sides afterwards.

24 This Bethabara was probably the same that is mentioned in the history of John the Baptist. It was, as the word imports, the usual place of crossing the river, being perhaps sometimes fordable in that place.

25 As the word Oreb signifies *a cavern*, and *zeeb a wolf* in Hebrew, it is probable that the language of the Midianites did not differ much from that of the Israelites. Indeed the Hebrew and Arabic, which was spoken in that country, were always, only different dialects of the same language.

Ch. VIII. 3. The reason of Gideon not asking the assistance of the Ephramites, when he did ask that of some other tribes, not so near to the scene of action does not appear. His answer was not to the purpose, as he only commends them for what they had done unasked.

5. This is a city in the tribe of Gad, mentioned Gen. xxxiii. 17, and other places.

6. They were still afraid of the Midianites; thinking, no doubt, that they might return, and take ample revenge for this disaster.

7 This

7. This is supposed to refer to a cruel method of putting persons to death, viz. laying briars and thorns on their naked bodies, and then drawing over them heavy instruments, such as they sometimes used in threshing corn. Thus David treated the Ammonites. 2. Sam. xii. 31.

8 This is another city in the tribe of Gad, to which Jacob gave a name. Gen. xxxii. 30, xxxiii. 17.

9 They had probably great confidence in their tower, or fortress, as able to protect them from his vengeance.

12 Jerom says that in his time there was a castle called *Carcaria* about a day's journey from Petra in Arabia. Three hundred men was a small force with which to pursue fifteen thousand and being now out of the bounds of the land of Canaan, he might not have the assistance of the country in the pursuit; and this might encourage the inhabitants of Succoth and Penuel to mock him as they did, imputing the former defeat of the Midianites to the surprize into which they had been thrown, and to their dissention among themselves, from which they might soon recover.

11. He must have got quite round them. For they fled towards the East, but with only three hundred men he could be able to march much faster than they with fifteen thousand. Besides out of the country of Gideon they might well think themselves out of all danger. He, therefore, took them by surprize at this time, as he had done at the first; and the effect was the same.

13. Dr. Geddes translates this, *by the heights of Heres*; so that it is no indication of any time.

16. *And with them he tore the men of Succoth, Cony. Ho.*

As it is not said that he put these men to death, he perhaps only treated them in some ignominious manner; but as he put to death the men of Penuel, tho' he had not threatened so much, he would hardly spare these of Succoth, when the provocation was the same in both the cases.

18. At what time was this laughter of the brothers of Gideon is not said. As the Midianites were not any of the devoted nations, Gideon was at liberty to use his own discretion with respect to them.

21. These ornaments for camels are said to have been in the form of a half moon, perhaps in honour of the goddess Astarte, whose worship was very extensive in these countries.

22 This shows that the people in general wished at this time to have a king, perhaps to give more union to the force of the country, which had suffered much from the want of it.

23 He justly thought that their original constitution, if it had been adhered to, was sufficient for every useful purpose.

24 The Ishmaelites and Midianites were either the same people, or nearly connected. They who bought Joseph, and sold him into Egypt, are called by both these names.

The Midianites not only wore these golden ornaments, but adorned their camels with them *Un. Hist.* vol. 3. p. 501.

27 This

27. This ephod is supposed to have been intended for a monument of his victory ; but as it is said to have been a snare to himself, as well as his house, it is not improbable but that some improper use was made of it from the first. Why was the form of an ephod made choice of, if it was not to serve some purpose of divination, similar to the use of the ephod of the high-priest, who always put it on when he inquired of the Lord? Whatever might have been the original design of this ephod, it was soon applied to this superstitious purpose.

As no use was made of gold in the construction of the Ephod besides for the *chains* by which it was suspended, and for the setting of the precious stones, Spencer is of opinion that the principal use of this gold was to make certain images or figures, which were the *urim* and *thummim*. But no mention is made of *urim* or *thummim* in this place, but only of the ephod.

33. Whatever superstitious use was made of this ephod in the life time of Gideon, it did not amount to the worship of another god. This Baal Berith was probably the Baal, or the sun, worshipped at Berytus, a city in Phenicia. The term *Baalim*, in the plural number, occurs here, and in other places, from there being several gods or goddesses which have this general appellation, but which were worshiped in different manners by different nations. Various of these rites were adopted by the Israelites.

Ch. IX. 3 Notwithstanding Gideon's renunciation of the sovereignty for himself and his sons, they seem to have been considered as having some claim to this distinction, so that the people had no choice but of some
of

of them ; and the inhabitants of Shechem were persuaded to take Abimelech because he was of their city, tho' spuriously born.

5 They were perhaps thrown down from a precipice upon a rock, or stone, which was no unusual method of putting to death. To this our Saviour alluded when he said Matt. xxi 44, *Whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken, but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.*

6. This may be rendered, *the men of Shechem, and the multitude thereof*, that is, both the chiefs and the common people in full assembly. Or *Millo* might have been the head of a principal family in the place. It was here that Joshua set up a pillar, as a memorial of the covenant between God and the people, Ch. xxiv, 26; but whether there was any respect to this in the present transaction does not appear. It might be merely a convenient place for a public assembly. It is evident from v. 27 that the Shechemites were at this time idolaters.

7 Mount Gerizim overlooked the city of Shechem.

13 *It cheers the heart of magistrates and common men.* GALE.

15. The meaning of the parable is, that good men being free from ambition, will generally prefer the discharge of the duties of private life to any public office, into which unworthy persons are often desirous of intruding themselves ; and that, in the abuse of their power, they will often destroy the worthiest citizens. This was particularly applicable to the rejection of all the legitimate

legitimate sons of Gideon, and the preference that was given to Abimelech.

21 Beer is supposed to have been in the tribe of Judah, where it is probable that the authority of Abimelech was not much regarded.

22 It is not said that he reigned over all Israel.

23 Every thing being by the sacred writers ascribed to the providence of God, this dissention between Abimelech and the Shechemites is said to have been produced by his sending an *evil spirit* among them; not that any superior evilbeing was employed on that occasion. For bad men are very apt to quarrel without any supernatural instigation.

26 Who this Gael was, and whence he came, does not appear.

27 It is evident from this that the Shechemites had reverted to the worship of Baal.

28. That is, the *man of Shechem*, or Abimelech. Dr. Geddes renders the verse, *has not a son of Jerubbaal and his deputy Zebul, made slaves of the Homerite Shechemites*. According to the LXX and other antient versions, the meaning is, "Are not Abimelech and his deputy servants to the house of Hamor the father of Shechem"; this Gael being supposed to be a Gentile, and desirous of restoring the authority of the original heathen lords of the place.

36 He wished to make him believe that they were not men, in order that they might take him by surprise.

38 Thinking it was now too late to oppose Abimelech, he derides him.

41 This was not far from Shechem, and from this place he could distress the Shechemites.

45 *The sawing with salt*, if salt was really used, must have been by way of ceremony, as an emblem that the place was not to be built upon any more. Or it may be nothing more than a phrase denoting a total demolition.

46 This tower must have been at some distance from the town, but not so strong a place as the temple of their god. Temples were often used as fortresses. This is the use of the pagodas in Indostan. The temple at Jerusalem proved to be a strong fortress, when Titus besieged and took the city.

50. This place was probably at no great distance from Shechem.

53 The mills with which corn was ground were turned by the hand, and therefore could not be very large. This, however, was only a fragment of a broken one.

54 Unless Abimelech had been alone, it could not but be known that his death came from a woman; so that his servant dispatching him in this manner would not avail him at all.

Ch. X. 2, It is not said from what enemy Tolah delivered the Israelites; but, living as he did in the northern part of the country, it is most probable that they were the Canaanites, in the neighbourhood of Tyre and Sidon. Issachar being near the northern extremity of the country, a place in the tribe of Ephraim, which was most in the center, was more convenient for his residence,

deuce, after being appointed judge or chief magistrate, if his office respected the whole country.

3. Jair being of Gilead, the enemy from which he delivered the country was probably the Midianites, or some other Arab tribes, in confederacy perhaps with the Moabites or Ammonites.

4. This was perhaps for the purpose of distributing justice to different parts of the country. For that the institutions of Moses for this and other purposes were much neglected, is evident from many circumstances. In these cities they probably resided as governors. They were, no doubt, the same cities to which a former Jair, called the *son*, or descendant, of *Manasseh*, had given the same name before, Num. xxxii. 42, but it was perhaps became obsolete. Or perhaps the writer of this book thought that they had their name from this Jair, and the writer of the book of Joshua that they had it from the former Jair, which will shew that these books were not written by the same person.

6. There was no material difference in the worship of these different deities ; and perhaps some of the Israelites conformed to the rites of some of them, and others to those of others, each adopting those of the nation that bordered upon them.

7. The Philistines were to the West, and the Ammonites to the East ; the former oppressing those on one side of Jordan, and the latter those on the other.

8. *At that time, LXX.*

The oppression of the Philistines continued forty years ; so that the period of eighteen years must relate to that of the Ammonites.

9. These tribes were contiguous to the river Jordan.

11. This was probably by the intervention of some prophet who is not named.

12. The Sidonians must mean the Canaanites under Jabin. Instead of Maonites, the LXX has Midianites, who, no doubt, are the people intended.

16. This appears to have been a general reformation, extending to the whole country ; and it continued a considerable time. Indeed we find no traces of the apostacy becoming general again till the times of the later kings.

17. This Mispah was probably in the tribe of Manasseh, to which Jephtha belonged. There was another place of the same name in the tribe of Gad, and on the same side of Jordan.

18. In this the people on the East side of Jordan acted independently of the rest of the Israelites, which, with many other circumstances, shews that there was a want of union in the nation.

Ch. XI. 2. It was expressly forbidden to the Israelitish women to be prostitutes, and therefore a prostitute and a *strange woman*, are synonymous terms in the book of Proverbs.

3. This place is not mentioned any where else, tho' it is perhaps the same that is called *Ish tob*. (2 Sam. viii. 68) in Syria, near to the Ammonites, and also the same that is alluded to 2 Maceb. xii. 17. The followers of Jephtha in this country were men of desperate fortunes, such as attached themselves to David when he fled from Saul.

6. Jephtha, having lived in this independent manner, like the Arabs, and being much exercised in war, had acquired so much reputation for his military conduct and courage, that his countrymen, not knowing how to do better, had recourse to him in this emergency.

11. They probably took a solemn oath, calling God to witness to it; which shews that, like David, Jephtha, tho' living in this predatory manner, was a worshipper of the true God.

12. In this he conformed to the mode of proceeding prescribed by Moses, not to make war till he had sent messengers with proposals for peace.

13. All the flat part of the country beyond Jordan had belonged to the Ammonites and Moabites, but it had been conquered from them by the Amorites, and it was from them, and not from the Ammonites, that the Israelites had taken it.

17. It was not said before that any messenger had been sent to the Moabites; but as this was done to the Edomites, and even to the Amorites beyond Jordan, it was, no doubt, done to the Moabites also.

18. It was not said before that they went round the country of the Moabites, but only that of the Edomites.

23. He, therefore, considered the country as at that time belonging to the Amorites, being irrecoverably lost to the Moabites and Ammonites.

24. Success in war, being frequently contrary to men's previous expectations, was always ascribed to the interference of superior powers.

25. That part of the country beyond Jordan which had belonged to the Moabites, but had been conquered

by the Amorites, was in the very same predicament with that part of it which [was claimed by the Ammonites, and yet it had never been demanded by them.

26. If this title had been a good one, it ought to have been urged before. If the possession of the Israelites had not been originally good, the length of time would have made it so to the present generation. If all the times of the administration of the judges that preceded Jephtha be put together, they will make a period of something more than three hundred years. But as these judges resided in different parts of the country, some of them might be cotemporary with others. Besides the term three hundred is so general, that exactness with respect to it is not necessary.

29. He, no doubt, felt a divine impulse, tho' he might not have so distinct a call to action as Gideon had. This Mispeh was in the northern part of the country towards Lebanon.

31. This must, no doubt, be understood of something that it was lawful to sacrifice. No worshipper of the true God would intend to act contrary to his express prohibition, by way of doing a thing that was acceptable to him.

37. Had she been to be sacrificed, the apprehension of a violent death would, no doubt, have been more upon her mind, than merely dying a virgin. She was devoted to pass a single life, tho' there does not appear to have been any proper obligation so to do.

39. When any persons were devoted to God, so that he might be said to have a right to take their lives, as was the case with respect to all the first born of the Israelites.

Israelites, who were spared when those of the Egyptians were destroyed, a redemption was accepted, and no doubt this was the case here, as an equivalent for the life of his daughter. This would have satisfied the law without devoting her to a single life. But perhaps he might think himself obliged to deprive himself as much as he lawfully could of any satisfaction he might have received from her, or her offspring; she being no longer his, but given to God, as Samuel was by his mother. Had this young woman been really sacrificed, the father must have taken her to the national altar, and the priests must have killed her, and presented the blood. And what priest would have done this? His killing her with his own hands would not have been a *sacrifice*, according to the intent and meaning of his vow, but a *murder*, for which his own life would have been forfeited. If the conduct of Jephtha in devoting his daughter to death could be justified, any other person might have murdered another after previous similar vow. For the laws of Moses would no more authorize a person to kill his daughter, than it would any other person. The vow was not to devote any thing to *destruction* (as חרם;) but to offer it as a *burnt offering*, and a vow once made could not be changed.

40. This is by some interpreted of singing songs in her praise; and indeed in lamenting her hard fate, they could not avoid celebrating her heroic sentiments.

CH. XII. 1. The Ephraimites were a powerful and haughty tribe, and being envious of the success of Jephtha, they quarrelled with him for not allowing them to share in the honour of his victory.

2. If they had been requested to join him, they had no excuse for their conduct.

4. This language was very insulting, and no doubt unjust. Perhaps some of the tribe of Ephraim had joined those of Manasseh in Gilead; and those by way of reproach, are called as we should say, *the scum of the country*.

6. There are districts in all countries the inhabitants of which are distinguishable by some peculiarity of articulation, as was the case with the Ephramites. The word *Shibbiloth* means a *stream of water*, and as they were about to pass over one, it was natural for their enemies to require them to pronounce that particular word, rather than any other that had the same letter in it, and which they knew that an Ephramite could not do. The great number that were slain on this occasion shews the violence of party spirit and civil war.

8. It is not said that he delivered Israel, but it might have been found convenient to invest some one person with extraordinary authority, such as some of the former judges had possessed.

13. Pirathon was in the tribe of Ephraim, v. 15.

15. This mountain may have had its name from its having been formerly in possession of the Amalekites, or from some defeat of the Amalekites near it.

Ch. XIII. 1. The beginning of this subjection to the Philistines was probably the same with that to the Ammonites mentioned before, the particulars of it being related after the other, because they were independent of them, and continued longer.

2 The

2. The tribe of Dan was contiguous to the Philistines.

4. This is the only instance of a mother being directed to observe the rules to which Nazarites were subject. Not only was the child to live in this manner, but the woman from whom he derived his nourishment before he was born.

5. He was not destined to effect the deliverance of his country. It was only to begin by his means.

6. She was struck with something venerable and majestic in his appearance.

12. As particular directions were given respecting the child before he was born, he would naturally ask for farther instructions with respect to his treatment afterwards, while he was still subject to them.

15. This was to shew their respect, as Abraham did to the person whom he entertained.

16. He declines any token of respect to himself, but directs them to shew their gratitude to God.

18. It may perhaps be inferred from this, that this appearance was like that to Abraham, not an angel, but a symbol of the divine presence in the form of a man.

22. They seem to have considered this appearance as representing the Divine Being, tho' they call it an angel.

24. Josephus says that the word signifies *strong*, but the derivation of it is not obvious.

25. He had, no doubt, some intimation given him of his being possessed of extraordinary power, and was prompted to exert it, tho' the instances are not mentioned. This place had its name given to it afterwards.

See Ch. xviii, 12, but tho' it was in the tribe of Judah, he might live there. It is supposed that the word *and*, which is in the LXX, is to be understood, the place between Zora and Eshtaol being different from the camp of Dan.

Ch. XIV. 1. This was in the tribe of Dan, Josh. xix 47, but it was probably occupied in a great measure by the Philistines.

3. The conduct of Samson was not expressly contrary to the law of Moses, Ex. xxxiv, 16—Deut. vii, 3, because the Philistines were not of the seven devoted nations, tho' it seems to have been so understood by Ezra. This, however, was an exception to the rule, if it was general; as there seems to have been a particular providence in Samson's attachment to this woman.

5. This part of the country must have been in a state of great desolation, as appears both from this lion that Samson met with, and that which David killed afterwards. When any country is fully inhabited, men will certainly expel lions, and all the larger beasts of prey.

6. He must have felt himself extraordinarily invigorated, and prompted to seize the lion.

8. In hot climates the carcases of camels, and of the largest animals, soon become perfectly dry, all the moisture in them being exhaled by the heat of the sun.

12. This seems to have been a part of the entertainment on the occasion.

14. The riddle, as proposed in this manner, might have been solved various ways; since many animals, which of course are *eaters*, are themselves food for other animals, and some of them not less strong than lions,

ons, and yet the flesh is sweet and nourishing. But that any person should, from the words in which the riddle was proposed, have found out that Samson had killed a lion, and found honey in the carcass, seems to have been absolutely impossible.

15. There does not appear to have been any sufficient reason for this anxiety about the interpretation of this riddle, and for the threatening of this woman and her family.

18. They answer him in that concise sententious manner which was always much admired in the East, corresponding to the manner in which the riddle was proposed. His reply has the appearance of a proverb; but how it came to be so does not appear. The meaning, however, is obvious, viz. that unless they had had some information from his wife, to whom he had explained the riddle, they could not have found it out.

19. The Philistines holding the Israelites in a state of unjust subjection, the two nations might be considered as in a state of war; and if he was divinely prompted to this action, the propriety of it cannot be questioned. He was only the instrument in the hand of God. Being displeased with his wife, probably on account of her revealing the secret of the riddle, he left her, but without any formal divorce; so that he was afterwards much offended when he found she was married to another person.

Ch. XV. 3 His having received this affront from a particular family, does not justify Samson in revenging himself on the whole nation.

4. Jackals, which are the animals here intended, are gregarious, and may be caught in great numbers. The fire brands might be at a considerable distance from the animals, by means of the strings by which they were tied together ; but this does not appear to have been necessary to his purpose, since if they had been separate, they would have run about and fired the corn ; tho' two of them being coupled together, they could not run so fast, and this might answer the purpose better.

6. There does not appear to have been any just cause of quarrel with this family, as they had no control on the conduct of Samson.

7. His quarrelling with the nation of the Philistines in this case seems more justifiable than in the former. They had destroyed a whole family out of enmity to him, tho' it was of their own people.

8. There is much difficulty in the interpretation of this phrase. According to the Chaldee he smote both the horsemen and footmen. Some conjecture that by *hip and thigh* may be meant professed wrestlers, or champions, who had been selected for this attack on Samson. *Fragments*, Vol. 2, p. 92. How many of them he killed is not said. It is evident that Samson acted wholly from himself, without any concurrence of his countrymen.

9. This place was so called for a reason that will be given presently.

12. They came to take him by force ; and they must have had a great idea of his strength and prowess, to come in such numbers against a single person. This
they

they must have done at the requisition of the Philistines.

14. Seeing him bound, they, no doubt, thought they had him in their power.

15. It is not said that he *slew* so many, but that he *smote* them. He probably killed some and dispersed the rest.

16. This seems to have been part of a song of triumph, which he composed on the occasion.

17. This signifies the throwing of the jaw-bone.

19. The fissure was made in the earth, and the meaning of the name is *found of him that was invoked*.

20. In what sense Samson can be said to have been a *judge* in Israel does not appear. The word may signify a state of power only, without proper authority. For the Israelites were in subjection to the Philistines all his time, and after his death. That he was ever resorted to to decide causes is not said, nor could any thing that is said of him tend to recommend him to an office of that kind. His extraordinary strength, which must have been ascribed to a supernatural cause, would, no doubt, confirm the Philistines in the belief of the superiority of the God of the Hebrews to their gods, or, those of any other nation; and would also help to keep up the spirits of the Israelites in their state of subjection, as not wholly deserted by their God, who had formerly done such great things for them.

Ch. XVI. 2. His going to Gaza, which was one of the principal cities of the Philistines, and without any attendants, would shew his contempt of the nation, if he went openly. But it is more probable that he did

not

not mean to discover himself. Indeed, had he gone openly, there would not have been any occasion to give particular information of his being there.

3. It is probable that, by some means or other, he had intelligence of their design. Without opening the gates, he tore up the posts to which they were hung, and he must have carried them to a considerable distance. For Gaza is situated in the plain country, and no hills are very near to it. This too he must have done in the view of those who kept guard at the gate at least; and tho' they might have assailed him with missile weapons, they were probably struck with such astonishment at the action, as to have lost all presence of mind, so as not to have had courage to attempt any thing against him.

4. This place was in the land of Israel; but the woman was probably a Philistine, as there can be little doubt of her being a prostitute.

5. They were five in all, as appears from Ch. iii, 3; and so many were their chief cities. The *pieces* were probably shekels, and then the amount of the whole will be about six hundred pounds English money.

7. He at first amused himself with deceiving her. And as the heathens in general ascribed great effects to trifling circumstances, and the number *seven* was much used in their charms, what he said would not appear improbable. The *withs* were probably green branches of vines, which are tough and flexible.

13. As the Nazarites did not cut their hair, they probably disposed of it in several plats. Samson had seven of them, v. 19. By weaving these into her web, he could

could not rise without carrying away all the machinery of the loom ; part of which probably consisted of a large beam, either driven into the ground, or fastened to the wall.

17. When he was apprized of her design, which he must have seen by her conduct on the former occasions, it seems extraordinary that he should really give her the important information that she wanted, respecting the true source of his great strength. He might perhaps think, notwithstanding what he had told her, that his strength once communicated would not leave him, especially as he employed it as it was intended, viz. against the Philistines.

20. From this it appears that he did not apprehend he had lost his strength with his hair, till he found to his cost that he had.

21. They treated him as a slave, and the grinding of corn, which was in hand mills, was a servile and laborious employment. By putting out his eyes, they, no doubt, thought themselves sufficiently guarded against him, tho' he should recover his strength.

22 It does not appear that there was any proper connection between the growth of his hair and the recovery of his strength, tho' this circumstance is mentioned. It shews, however, that he must have been a considerable time, several months at least, in this ignominious situation.

23. By whatever means any event, fortunate or unfortunate, was brought about, it was ascribed to the agency of superior beings. And tho' not in the manner in which they apprehended, this is strictly true,
and

and the hand of God is to be acknowledged in all events. They imagined that there was an immediate interference of superior power on these occasions ; but there is no occasion for this supposition. The original plan, which comprehends all events, being laid by the Supreme Being, the powers of men, and of all creatures, being originally imparted by him, and their original situation being his appointment, whatever arises from this disposition of things, must be agreeable to his will and design.

Dagon is generally thought to have been the same deity with Astarte, or Ashteroth of the Syrians ; commonly called the *Syrian goddess* ; and as the word *dag* signifies *fish*, it is thought that the image of this deity was in part at least in the form of a fish. It is certain that the Syrians abstained from fish, and that sacred fishes were kept in a lake near to their temples. It is, however, an objection to the hypothesis of Dagon being the same with the goddess Astarte, that the word in the Hebrew is in the masculine gender. Jurieu supposes Dagon to have been the same with Neptune, the Grecian and Roman god of the sea, and that *Amphitrite* his wife, was *Derceto* a female deity worshipped at Ascalon.

25. The fight of Samson in this situation must have been the cause of great joy and triumph to the people to whom he had done so much mischief. They probably, however, made him dance, or perform some particular exercise to divert them.

27. This building was perhaps a temple, tho' few of the heathen temples were large ; not being intended
to

to hold many people. For the sacrifices were in the open air. The temple itself contained only the image of the god, and was used for certain ceremonies performed by the priests. They were also generally without light. This building, whatever it was, must have been so constructed as that the whole of it, or at least the galleries within it, must have rested on two pillars within the reach of a man's arms. And that such buildings were sometimes erected appears from what Pliny relates of a theatre which he says (tho' no doubt hyperbolically) would contain all the Roman people, and was so constructed as to depend on one hinge ; so that he wondered at their madness in venturing into the place, the safety of which was so uncertain. Had that hinge failed, he says that more people would be killed than at the battle of Cannæ. What is here called a *roof* was probably a *gallery*, from every part of which Samson, being placed in the centre, might be seen.

Shaw says that he saw in Algiers buildings in the form of a large penthouse, supported by only one or two contiguous pillars in the front, or else in the centre, on which were many hundreds of people diverting themselves with exhibitions in the court below.

28. From this it is evident that the strength of Samson did not necessarily return with his hair.

30. Not only did more persons die on this occasion, but persons of more consequence. This amazing exertion of strength would tend to convince the Philistines that there was in Israel a power, superior to that of all their gods ; and that the exertion of it did not depend upon any thing in the nature of a *charm*, as it was

was imparted on the prayer of Samson, which was probably delivered with a loud voice ; and being heard by all the company, some who escaped the calamity reported it. This would add much to the impression which this most extraordinary event would make on all the nation.

31. By Samson's judging Israel may perhaps be meant his continuing in the exercise of his strength, so as to do mischief to the Philistines, and thus in some measure to restrain their oppression of the Israelites. The office of judge being annexed to that of chief magistrate, or a person possessed of power, the term seems to have become synonymous. Thus Christ and the saints being said to have a *kingdom* in a future world, are also said to *judge* the world.

Ch. XVII. 1. In this chapter we have a curious piece of history, but without any hint as to the date of it, except that it was in the time of the judges, and probably not long after the death of Joshua. We may learn from it in what manner idolatry was introduced into the country.

3. This woman seems to have been an opulent widow living with her son, who had robbed her of a sum of money which she had destined to a religious use. When she missed it, she solemnly adjured all the family on the subject, but without having made any discovery of the imbezzlement. This the son now acknowledges he had been guilty of ; and she, being highly pleased with the discovery, and his frank confession, blesses him in the name of Jehovah. From this it appears that she had

had no intention of worshipping any other than the true God, tho' she did it in a manner forbidden by the law.

It is evident from many circumstances, that this was not generally considered as a crime of much consequence, notwithstanding the express prohibition in the decalogue. Otherwise the Israelites in general could not possibly have so soon adopted the worship of the golden calf, or in the time of Jeroboam have set up the calves at Dan and Bethel. They were, no doubt, considered as symbols of the powers, or attributes, of the true God. The people must have thought that while they kept to the proper object of worship, the manner in which the worship was conducted was not of much consequence. And this worship of God by images, tho' much censured, is always considered by the sacred writers in a very different light from the worship of Baal and other heathen deities. The better kings of Israel, who like Jehu, put down the worship of Baal, still made use of the calves of Jeroboam.

The only difficulty is to account for their paying so little regard to an express prohibition. They must have thought themselves at liberty in some measure to judge for themselves in this case, and have imagined that the offence could not be very great; not being aware how far this first transgression would lead them, and that after paying no regard to the divine authority in one thing, they might in time come to pay no regard to it in any.

In this state of mind, and using their own judgment, after the worship of the true God by images, or symbols, they might think that, so long as they did not de-

by his existence, or his superiority to other gods, which they never appear to have done, they might innocently pay some worship to inferior beings, as employed by him in the government of the world ; not being aware that this practice would lead to a total neglect of him, as much if he had not existed, and even end in absolute atheism. This was the actual progress of the sentiments and conduct of the heathen world. The only place at which they could stop was at the prohibition of the decalogue, worshipping no other than an invisible and omnipresent deity, without any image or symbol whatever.

4. In what form these images were made (for there were two of them) it not said, but as the Israelites in the wilderness, and Jeroboam afterwards, made use of the form of a *bull*, such as was used in Egypt, it is not improbable that at least one of these images was of this kind.

5. To these two images, which were made by the direction of the mother, the son seems to have added teraphim, which were images with the head at least of a man ; such, no doubt, as had been used by Laban, tho' not perhaps as direct objects of worship, but for the purpose of divination. Such was certainly the use of the ephod which they also made. And now Micah, having set apart his son to officiate as a priest, thought himself a religious man, and intitled to divine favour.

6. Tho' there was no king, there ought by the laws of Moses, to have been *judges*, who should have taken an account of this conduct of Micah. But no person
appears

appears to have interfered on the occasion, to put the law into execution.

7. There was another Bethlehem in the tribe of Zebulun, but this was in that of Judah, the birthplace of David afterwards. This Levite had resided at Bethlehem, tho' it was not a Levitical city; and he was in quest of another settlement, evidently without any regard to his character, or function; so much were the institutions of Moses neglected.

Of the family of Judah, not in some MSS.

13. His preference of [a Levite to be his priest, rather than his son, shews that he retained some regard to the institutions of Moses. This conduct he thought meritorious; so far was he from suspecting that he had done any thing that was wrong, and offensive to God.

Ch. XVIII. 1. They had not got possession of all the towns allotted to them; being probably straitened by the Philistines, and other ancient inhabitants of the country, against whom they had not exerted themselves as they ought to have done.

3. As this Levite had left the place of his birth, and was now in the tribe of Ephraim, he might have been in other places, and by this means have been known to some of these Danites.

5. These Danites appear to have had no suspicion of there being any thing reprehensible in what Micah had done; which shews that the departure from the institutions of Moses was pretty general.

6. He answers as from the true God, Jehovah, and probably imagined, from some use he had made of the

ephod or teraphim, that the enterprize would be successful.

7. This was at the foot of mount Lebanon, near the source of Jordan, but at a distance from the Sidonians, who were of the same nation, and very powerful. No mention is yet made of Tyre, tho' still nearer to this place.

12. This must have been in the fields near this city, and probably to the West of it. The term *before* signifies to the East, as the Mediterranean is called the *hindermost* sea, Deut. xi. 24.

19. We see a great mixture of religion and immorality in the conduct of these Danites: but this is far from being uncommon, the most serious superstition having been accompanied with every species of immorality in all ages.

22. Micah was joined by his neighbours in his endeavours to recover his property, and they probably approved of his conduct in other respects. He was certainly very injuriously treated.

24. They had taken that part of his property on which he set the greatest value.

27. These people were, no doubt, of the seven nations, which they were authorized to destroy; but still there was something very reprehensible in this proceeding, especially after so long an interval of peace, and without giving them any warning to leave the country which they claimed.

30. *The son of Gershon, the son of Moses.* MSS.

Having succeeded in their enterprize, as Micah's priest had told them they would do, they would be the more

more encouraged to set up the same worship. This Jonathan might be the Levite whom they had brought from the house of Micah, whose name was not mentioned before. The *captivity* here mentioned was perhaps that of the ark by the Philistines, for so it is called Ps. LXXVII, 60—61.

Ch. XIX. 1. He seems to have been a stranger in this part of the country, like the Levite in the preceding chapter. The woman, who is here called a *concubine*, was in reality a *wife*, tho' of a lower order, not having any dowry or jointure. Accordingly the man is called her husband, and her father his father-in-law.

2. According to the LXX she had not committed adultery, but had been refractory and disobedient.

9. Here is all the appearance of a thorough reconciliation.

11. This was Jerusalem, then in the possession of the Jebusites.

18. He intended to go to Shiloh, where the tabernacle was erected, in the tribe of Ephraim. Being a Levite, he might be going to officiate in that capacity there, or to perform some act of religion on his own account.

19. He had all that he wanted for his provision, and probably a tent also; so that his sleeping in the street would have been no great inconvenience. To this day there are no inns in the East, except in large towns; and even there travellers are well satisfied with *caravanseras*, or houses in which themselves and their camels, or asses, can receive shelter only.

22. That any Israelites should have arrived at this

pitch of wickedness, which was equal to that Sodom, is most extraordinary, and especially in so early a period as this; for it could not have been a long time after the death of Joshua, and before there was any appearance of a falling into idolatry.

24. His behaviour was the same with that of Lot in the same circumstances. So sacred with them were the rights of hospitality, that they thought the abuse of their own daughters a less evil than the violation of them.

29. Nothing could have been better calculated to excite a general horror and indignation than this proceeding, and the effect was answerable to it.

Ch. XX. 1. If Dan was in the possession of the Israelites at the time of this event, this transaction must have been subsequent to the expedition of the Danites, which is not probable. All that can be inferred from the phrase is, that that expedition was prior to the writing of this book. The Mispah here mentioned was not far from Shiloh, and there were public assemblies at that place in after times, 1 Sam. vii, 5, x, 17.

13. Nothing could have been more proper or regular, than this proceeding of the great body of the Israelites; and the conduct of the Benjamites is as difficult to account for as any thing in this history. But it is certainly such a history as no Israelite would have invented. Tho' highly disgraceful, it has every internal mark of genuineness. What the Benjamites could say in their defence does not appear.

16. Having been lately exercised in the wars of Joshua, the people in general were not deficient either
in

in courage or skill in the art of war; and there must have been a great falling off in this respect afterwards, to give the neighbouring nations such advantage as they generally had against them. The use of the sling was not confined to the tribe of Benjamin. David must have had great confidence in his dexterity in the use of this weapon when he challenged Goliath.

18. At this time the institutions of Moses were adhered to, the high priest consulting the oracle on great occasions, in the presence of the civil magistrates, and receiving an answer in an articulate voice. This is the second instance of pre-eminence being given to the tribe of Judah.

21. It is not easy to account for this want of success in a cause so just as this, and when the proceeding was seemingly so regular. They, did not, however, ask whether they should go to war or not, or whether they should succeed, but only which tribe should take the lead, and there might be good reasons, of which we are no judges, why innocent persons should suffer on this occasion, as others often do, together with the guilty. The Benjamites could not have been so wicked without the contagion having spread to other tribes.

23. In this case they ask whether they should persist in the war, and they were encouraged to do it, but without any promise of success.

26. It does not appear that they had done this before; but we cannot ascribe so great a disaster as this to the omission of a ceremony.

28. From this it appears that this transaction was not

very long after the death of Joshua. At this time they had a promise of victory, but not before.

35. This is the sum total of the loss, the particulars of which are given afterwards.

48. They did not spare even the women, the children, or the cattle ; so great was their rage, inflamed, no doubt, by their own losses.

Ch. XXI. 2. This rash oath, and their repentance after it, are equally natural, after the full gratification of their revenge, and when they began to reflect that one of their tribes was nearly exterminated.

4. This altar was probably erected because that in the tabernacle was too small for the sacrifices that were made on this occasion, and being erected in the place which God had appointed, and no doubt, constructed of unhewn stones, according to the directions that were given for that purpose, it was not contrary to the law.

5. This was another rash vow that they had made in the height of their resentment.

9. This was a city on the other side of Jordan.

19. This was probably the feast of tabernacles, the most joyful of any, when the harvest and vintage were completely got in.

22. This was only an evasion of their vow, and was in fact giving them wives, as they were allowed to take them. The tribe of Benjamin never recovered this disaster, being ever after small compared with the others ; a kind of appendage to that of Judah, the fortunes of which it shared when the other ten tribes separated from the house of David.

NOTES ON THE BOOK OF

R U T H.

THIS book, like the last articles in that of Judges, relates to the time that intervened between the death of Joshua and the birth of Samuel, three generations before David, whose genealogy is contained in it; and nothing later is mentioned, or alluded to, in it. It may perhaps be referred to the time of Gideon, or Shamgar, about one hundred and twenty years after Joshua.

Ch. I. 1. If this famine was occasioned by war, it was probably in the time of Gideon, when, as we read, Jud. vi. 3. *the Midianites, the Amalekites, and the children of the East, destroyed the increase of the earth, and left no sustenance for Israel, nor for their cattle.*

2. This place was called Ephrata, as well as Bethlehem. An Ephrathite may denote a native of the place, in opposition to a stranger or resident.

4. This marriage into an idolatrous nation was contrary to the laws of Moses; but at this time too little regard was paid to them in things of more importance than this. It is possible, however, that these women had renounced idolatry. As many Israelites became idolaters, so it is probable that some persons in the neighbouring idolatrous nations would prefer the religion of
the

the Israelites. This was remarkably the case in the time of our Saviour.

11. This refers to the obligation a man was under to marry his brother's widow.

15. From this it may be inferred that Orpah had renounced idolatry, and reverted to it again.

16. Ruth seems to have adopted the religion of her mother-in-law because it was hers. The attachment she had to her is very pleasing.

19. Elimelech must have been a person of considerable consequence in this place, or so much notice would not have been taken of the return of his widow.

21. *Nazni* signifies consolation, and *Mara*, bitterness.

22. The barley harvest preceded that of wheat. It was soon after the time of passover, at which green ears of barley were presented.

Ch. II. 4. There is a pleasing air of piety in this form of salutation, wishing that God would bless their labours. It seems to have been customary with the Jews. Ps. cxxix, 8.

7. She probably had no right to glean till after the sheaves were carried away, when there was no opportunity for stealing. The *house* here mentioned was perhaps a tent, or shed, for the use of the reapers.

11. This language gives us a pleasing idea of the character of Booz, as a man of humanity and piety.

13. There is much modesty in this language. Being a stranger, she thought herself inferior to servants of the Israelitish nation.

14. There were women reapers as well as men. This giving her of the provisions shews that she had not
taken

taken any herself, notwithstanding the leave that was given her.

15. As if she meant to take more than she had a right to.

17. It is customary in many countries to beat out the corn in the field, and the straw and chaff are left there.

18. This was probably the remains of what had been given to her in the field.

20. Her kindness to the living shewed her respect for their relations that were dead.

21. The phrase *young men* means *servants* in general, including even women, as appears from the next verse.

Keep fast by my maidens. LXX.

Ch. III. 1. As a parent, she was naturally desirous to provide an establishment for her, by getting her a husband.

5. Confiding in the prudence of her mother-in-law, she implicitly followed her directions.

7. This conduct of Ruth is certainly open to an unfavourable construction. But considering the respectable character of all the parties, a person who makes due allowance for different customs and manners, may be satisfied that nothing really reprehensible was intended; tho' some other method of reminding Booz of his duty would appear to have been preferable. It is not probable that either of them was undressed.

9. Her meaning was, not that he would take her to his bed at that time, but take her under his protection, as his intended lawful wife, by promising to marry her;
and

and the Jews say that this was signified by the man's putting the skirt of his garment over the woman. This was evidently her object, and not prostitution, which was all that she could have expected from cohabitation at this time.

10. Had Booz thought there had been any thing immodest, or improper, in the conduct of Ruth, he could never have expressed himself in this manner, and commended her so highly. From this speech of his it is probable that he was not a young man; and he considered her conduct as laudable, denoting her respect for the relation of her husband, and a desire of raising his family.

14 This language shews that this conduct of Ruth tho' not wrong in itself, was liable to misconstruction. Certainly, however, this is not a story that any Israelite would have invented. Whatever objection may be made to the behaviour of the persons concerned, the narrative has every mark of truth, and none of fiction.

Ch. IV. 1. This was the place of general concourse, where courts of justice were held, and all public business transacted.

3. No estate in land could be wholly alienated from any family. It could only be mortgaged till the year of Jubilee.

5. *Thou must also take Ruth*, SYR. JEROM.

By *brother* is probably to be understood the next male relation of a suitable age, and as such he was obliged by the law (Deut. xxvi. 5.) to marry the widow, but not to purchase the estate; and Booz, observes that if he
took

took the estate, he should likewise marry the widow, as what would in that case be expected of him.

6. A man's being already married did not prevent his taking another wife, especially in such a case as this, which was to perpetuate the name of a brother; but on several accounts it might be inconvenient.

7. The delivery of the shoe was intended to express his surrender of the right. Since instead of the shoe the Chaldee Paraphrast has the *right hand glove*, it is probable that in after times this was delivered instead of the shoe. For this purpose the Jews at this day deliver a handkerchief. It is evident from this delivery of the shoe being called an antient custom, that this book was not written very near to the time of the transaction, at least that this clause was not written till some time afterwards.

8. This was probably done by that relation, who hereby signified his relinquishment of his right to purchase:

17. *Obed* signifies a *servant*, to express how serviceable and useful he would be to her.

20. Nahshon was the chief of the tribe of Judah when they came out of Egypt, Num. i. 7. ii. 3. vii. 12. 1. Chron. ii. 10.

22. As there were four hundred and forty years from the Israelites leaving Egypt to the fourth of Solomon, when the temple was built, if there were no more generations in this interval then are here mentioned, each of these persons must have been born when their fathers were more than an hundred years old. This, tho' possible, is so improbable, that we may rather suppose

pose that some generations are omitted in this account, and that only the principal persons in the line of descent are recorded; which is the case with other genealogies in the scripture history.

NOTES ON THE FIRST BOOK OF

SAMUEL.

THE two books that bear the name of *Samuel*, or sometimes the *first and second of Kings*, are supposed with great probability, to have been written in part by Samuel, and in part by the prophets Gad and Nathan. That all these three persons were writers appears from 1 Chron. xxix, 29, where it is said, *Now the acts of David, first and last, behold they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer.* Here they are referred to separate books; but it would be natural for Ezra, or some other compiler, to throw the contents of them all into these two. A circumstance related in this book is referred to 1 Kings, ii, 27.

Ch. I. 1. From this it appears that Samuel was a Levite, and that he was of the family of Kohath appears from 1 Chron. vi, 23.

Eli was descended from Ithamar, the youngest son of Aaron, and it does not appear at what time the high-priesthood

priesthood passed into this family from that of Phinehas the elder brother. But if this Eli was the first high-priest of his family, it is thought (tho' for what reason does not appear) to have passed to him from Uzzi mentioned 1 Chron. vi, 5. Before this Uzzi there was his father *Bukki*, and his grandfather *Abishua*, the son of Phinehas. The high-priesthood reverted to the family of Phinehas in the person of Zadoc in the time of Solomon.

4. The portions here mentioned were of the peace offerings, which were shared between the priests and the offerers.

5. Joseph shewed his particular respect to Benjamin by sending him from his table a morsel five times larger than those of the others. In like manner Elkanan sent either more in quantity, or what was better in quality, to Hannah.

6. It seems extraordinary that barrenness should have been considered as so great a reproach, when it was merely a misfortune, and no crime; or that any woman, merely favoured with a better constitution, should so grossly insult another on that account.

11. The Levites were obliged to serve at the sanctuary, from the age of twenty five to fifty. She devoted her child to this service all his life, and moreover laid him under an obligation to observe the restrictions of the Nazarites.

15. An intoxicating liquor was made of dates, and various other fruits, as well as of grapes.

18. The blessing of the high-priest seems to have given her hopes that her prayer was heard.

20. The word *Samuel* signifies *asked of God*.

21 He

21. He had probably made some vow, tho' it is not mentioned, on the same account for which his wife had made one.

23. The meaning of this must be, that God would accept the child, and make him what he wished him to be.

88. Five MSS. have *they worshipped the Lord*, which make a better sense.

Ch. II. 1. This is a hymn of praise, and a part of it, being an address to God, it is called a *prayer*. It must have been a composition committed to writing, and as it related to so remarkable a person as Samuel afterwards was, it was copied by other persons.

3. In this there is, no doubt, a reference to the insults of Peninnah.

8. These examples of the direction of providence in changing the fates of men are properly alleged, to prevent any sentiment of pride or insolence. The world itself being founded by God, every thing in it is at his disposal. The LXX has the following addition "*who giveth to the vower his wish, and blesses the years of the just. For man by his own might is not mighty. Holy is the Lord. Let not the wife man glory in his wisdom, nor the mighty man glory in his might, or the rich man glory in his riches; but in this alone let him glory, in understanding and knowing the Lord, and doing judgment and justice in the earth. The Lord ascendeth the heavens and thundereth. He judgeth the ends of the earth. To our kings he will give power, and exalt the horn of his anointed. And she left him there before the Lord, and returned to Ramtha.*" &c.

10 What

10. What the idea of Hannah was in this expression is uncertain. It probably was that God could exalt whomsoever he pleased to the office and power of a king, and set him above all his enemies.

13. As the meat of the peace offerings was to be eaten in the presence of the Lord, being, as it were, an entertainment at his table, there were rooms adjoining to the tabernacle and the temple, in which meat was boiled or roasted for that purpose.

14. The priests were by the law intitled to the breast and the right shoulder ; but not content with this, these sons of Eli would also take of that which belonged to the offerer.

15. The fat was considered as the Lord's portion ; and that the priest, who was the ministering servant of God should be served before him, was high'y improper.

16. Not content with the portion allotted to him by the law, or even what he took, in the unjustifiable manner before mentioned, of the boiled meat, he would take other pieces to roast.

17. They brought the sacrifices into contempt, and neglect, by their abuses.

18. There was no particular dress prescribed to the Levites, their office being of a servile nature. This ephod, therefore, would distinguish Samuel from the other Levites. A garment of this kind, which covered the breast and part of the back, was worn by other persons on solemn occasions, as we find it was by David, 2 Sam. vi, 24.

22. That any person attending the sanctuary should be guilty of these shocking immoralities is very extraor-

dinary ; tho' they were commonly practised within the precincts of the heathen temples.

25. This may be rendered, *wherefore the Lord would slay him.*

These offences were more directly in contempt of God, who was therefore, of course, both the party offended and the judge. In this case no mercy could be expected. He should not, however, have contented himself with these expostulations, but have interposed a judicial authority, to prevent or punish these offences. In this case, as in many others, the refractoriness of these men is ascribed to God, as was that of Pharaoh, tho' it arose from their own natural dispositions, and the punishment was the proper consequence of it.

29. From this it is evident that it was in the power of Eli to have prevented the abuses against which he had remonstrated.

32. By *enemy* may be understood a *rival* in another branch of the family of Aaron succeeding to the high-priesthood; as it did in Zadok, who was descended from Phinehas, as Eli was from Ithamar.

36. The heavy judgments here denounced, were, no doubt, fulfilled, but not immediately. For the high-priesthood continued in the family of Eli till Abiathar, who was of it, was deposed, and Zadok, descended from Eleazar, put in his place.

Ch. III. 1. It does not appear how old Samuel was at this time, but he was, no doubt, a young man of competent understanding, and not, as has been supposed, a mere child. By there being no *open vision* is probably

meant

meant, that there was no person known to be a prophet, to whom the people could have recourse.

2—3. Houbigant would transpose these verses.

There were, no doubt, various rooms adjoining to the tabernacle, as there were to the temple afterwards, for the use of the priests. In one of these Eli slept, and in another, near to it, Samuel.

3. There were seven lamps in the golden candlestick, some of which were always kept burning, tho' others might go out, which would be towards morning.

8. From the repetition of the call, and perhaps from other circumstances, Eli concluded that there was something extraordinary in the case, and that the voice must have proceeded from God. And his suspicion of this shews that divine communications had been frequently made in the same manner.

11. This probably alludes to the taking of the ark by the Philistines, which, like other events, is ascribed to God, the author of universal nature and providence, as taking place by his appointment, or permission.

12. That is, all the judgments that had been denounced by the prophet that had been sent to Eli.

15. Samuel discharged the office of a Levite, and one of these was to open and shut the outer door of the tabernacle.

18. Eli must have been a man of real piety, to have expressed such devout resignation, on hearing of the judgments of God on his family.

19. That is, he was a true prophet;

21. God spake to him by an audible voice, and not in a vision.

Ch. IV. 1. Being universally considered as a prophet, he was resorted to, and obeyed, through the whole country. This name was given to the place afterwards, when a successful battle was fought there against the Philistines. Aphec was in the tribe of Judah, bordering on the country of the Philistines.

2. It does not appear that God, or Samuel, was consulted in this war.

4. This was evidently a measure of the people, without the consent of Samuel or Eli. But that the thing itself was not improper, appears from the same thing being done by David in his wars.

8. *And did wonders in the wilderness.* CHAL.

From this it appears that the Philistines, and no doubt other neighbouring nations, had heard of the wonderful appearances of God in favour of the Israelites, and that they were greatly impressed with them.

9. Having more to apprehend, they had occasion for their utmost exertions, especially as the event of a defeat would be their servitude to the Israelites.

11. This would appear to be the greatest misfortune that could have befallen the country; and yet it was so ordered by divine providence, as to give occasion to the greatest triumph over the gods of the Philistines, which must have been attended with the most happy consequences, both to the Israelites, and other nations.

13. It is pretty evident from this, that Eli had not consented to the removal of the ark.

18. He was more sensibly affected with the news of the capture of the ark, than with that of the death of his sons; which shews that his religious affections were stronger

stronger than his natural ones. By his being called a *judge* nothing perhaps is meant but that he was the person the most distinguished in the country, which was the case with respect to every high-priest, when there was no other person appointed to a high civil office. But it is pretty evident from the history of the war, that he had not been consulted about it, and therefore he cannot be supposed to have had much influence in civil affairs.

22. Notwithstanding the profligacy Phinehas's character, his wife must have been a woman of great piety. And it is very possible that Phinehas himself might have been affected in a similar manner if he had survived the misfortune. For a sense of religion is often found accompanied with great vices.

Ch. V. 2. It would, no doubt, be the cause of great triumph to the Philistines to have taken the ark ; and ascribing this great success to the favour and power of their own god, they naturally placed it in his temple, as a trophy of their victory. This was usually done by the heathens, when any remarkable spoil was taken in war.

Dagon was, according to Jurieu, the Neptune of the Greeks and Romans, the god of the sea ; and Derecto, a female deity worshipped [at Ascalon, might be the same with Amphitrite, the wife of Neptune. He farther supposes that Baal and Ashteroth (or Astarte) of the East correspond to Jupiter and Juno the celestial divinities of the West ; and that Beelzebub (the same he supposes with Serapis) and Isis correspond to Pluto and Proserpine, deities of the infernal regions. *Histoire*

des dogmes. The common opinion is that Dagon is the same with the goddess Astarte ; but in the Hebrew the word is, as I have observed, in the masculine gender, which is favourable to the hypothesis of Jurieu.

3. This was a peculiarly reasonable and instructive miracle, to shew the superiority of the God of the Israelites to that of the Philistines. No Israelite could have had access to this temple, so as to have done it undisturbed.

4. As what had befallen this idol might have been from some natural cause, tho' they could not tell what, they replaced the image, and, no doubt, would make it as secure as they could. But notwithstanding all their precautions, something still more disastrous had now taken place. All the upper part of the image, which is said to have been in a human form, was broken off, and the stump which is thought to have been in the form of a fish, was left upon the pedestal. It was probably thrown down in such a manner that the neck falling on the threshold the head was by this means separated from it. The reason, however, why they should after this avoid treading on the threshold of the temple is not every evident. That the image having touched the threshold should be supposed to have made it sacred, is not probable ; tho' it is a general opinion. They might perhaps think there was something ominous to themselves in what had been so fatal to their idol. But whatever might be the reason of it, the heathens in general paid superstitious respect to the thresholds not of their temples only but of their houses; and on this account the Roman brides were not suffered to tread on the thresholds of their

their husband's houses, but were always lifted over them. I rather suspect that this superstition is of older date than the event here recorded. But the origin of many superstitious practices is so obscure, that it is now impossible to trace them. Who can tell why sailors whistle for a wind, or when or how the custom began? The same may be said of a thousand other superstitious practices, some of which are almost universal; such as the various modes of divination, by the flight of birds, the meeting with particular animals, and the forms of the entrails in sacrifices, &c. &c.

6. *And mice rose out of the earth in the villages and in the fields, and there was a great mortality in the city.*

LXX. VULG.

What was the disease with which these people were afflicted, is not ascertained. It must have been attended with some external protuberance, because images were made of it; and from the allusion to it in Ps. LXXVIII, 66, it must have affected the hinder parts, probably the anus, and therefore, tho' accompanied with the dysentery, or something more fatal, it may have been the emroids.

7. Concluding that the cause of their sufferings, which were peculiar to themselves, was the presence of the ark with them, they naturally wished to have it removed. This would likewise serve for a test whether this was the real cause or not.

12. The ark having made the circuit of the whole country, and the same dreadful calamities having always accompanied it, there could not remain any doubt of its having been the true cause of their suffering

ing. And certainly nothing but this persuasion could have induced them to send away such a valuable trophy of their late victory. The gold only with which it was overlaid was worth a great sum.

Ch. VI. 3. This was a natural resolution. They justly concluded that they had offended the God of the Israelites by the capture of his ark, and therefore that they must make some atonement for their offence.

4. It was the custom of the heathens to present to their gods some memorial of the benefits they supposed they had received from them, a custom which the christians adopted after them; and the Philistines being delivered from two great plagues, the mice which had ravaged their fields, and the emrods which afflicted themselves, they naturally thought of making images of them, and sending them back with the ark.

6. From this it appears that the history of the Israelites in Egypt, and of their deliverance from their state of bondage there, were well known to the neighbouring nations, and kept in remembrance by them. And the impression it made on their minds was such as might have been expected, a great dread of the power of the God of Israel.

12. No more convincing evidence of a divine interposition could have been contrived. The cows without a supernatural impulse would never have left their calves. Still less would cows belonging to the Philistines have left their home, and places of pasture and feeding, to go to a distant country. But these not only do this, but they take the direct road to the land of Israel.

13 The

13. The joy expressed by the people on the return of the ark was natural ; and so was their sacrificing, to express their joy and their piety.

19. It could not but be well known to these people, that only the priests had any thing to do with the ark ; and it pleased God to check their presumption in opening it, tho', no doubt, they meant nothing more than to see whether any thing had been taken out of it, or put into it. The number slain was probably seventy, not seven hundred. So it is in Josephus, and three MSS. Whatever may be objected to the conduct of the Divine Being in this transaction, it would tend to impress the people with a greater reverence for the ark, as consecrated to him, and the appointed token of his residence with the nation, and a proof of the attention that God gave to it, and to them. I would observe farther that such circumstances as these are evidences of the genuineness of the history. No Israelite would have invented them.

21. This was a city in the neighbourhood, and a place of considerable strength, where they might think the ark would be safe ; tho' after what had taken place they did not need to have been under any apprehensions about it.

Ch. VII. 1. There does not appear to have been any good reason for their not carrying the ark to the tabernacle, which was its proper place. Shiloh, indeed, is said to have been destroyed by the Philistines, and the tabernacle to have been removed to Nob, where it remained to the time of Samuel, after which it was carried to

Gibeon, where it is said to have remained fifty years, till it was taken by David to mount Sion in Jerusalem. This Eleazar was, no doubt, a Levite, this city belonged to them. He was appointed to see that no injury happened to it.

2. As the ark continued in this place forty six years, the *twenty* that are here mentioned must, it is thought, be understood of the time before the Israelites returned to the complete observance of their law, the daily sacrifices having been discontinued. But it is by no means probable that these sacrifices at the national altar in the tabernacle were ever discontinued at this time. I rather suspect that there is some error in the number, which was meant to express the whole of the time that the ark was in the place ; and this application to Samuel was presently after the return of the ark.

3. The strange gods were Baalim, or of the male kind, and Ashteroth was a female deity.

4. This seems to have been a general reformation thro' the whole country ; and it continued from this time till the end of the reign of Solomon.

6. What was signified by this pouring out of the water is uncertain ; but it was perhaps intended to denote the washing away of their impurities and idolatry, tho' we have no account of any repetition of this rite.

We have no account of any precept requiring water to be poured out, or in any way offered, to God. But this was common with the heathens. Lucian says that a great quantity of water was brought twice a year from the sea to the temple of the Syrian Goddesses. And it is probable both from the gospel history, and the accounts

counts of the Jewish Rabbi's that the Jews carried water as a religious rite, and poured it on the altar at the feast of tabernacles. *Spencer* p. 1095.

11. This defeat of the Philistines seems to have been effected by the terror from the lightning, which they considered as the immediate act of God. The Israelites seem to have done little besides pursuing them.

13. This was probably the termination of the forty years of their subjection to the Philistines, the first check they received being in the time of Samson. The Amorites were to the South, bordering upon the Philistines; but what places were held by them is not said.

15. This can only mean till the time of Saul; tho' when he was made king Samuel was old, so that he could not discharge the duty of a civil office.

16. He made a circuit through the country to hear the causes that were referred to his decision. From this it is evident, that there was not at this time any such court of justice as that of the Sanhedrim.

17. This must have been an occasional altar, and not for the daily sacrifice, which was always at the national altar at the tabernacle, wherever that was; and tho' the Philistines might have destroyed Shiloh, the tabernacle was not destroyed. For we find that it was set up in other places, and continued till the erection of the temple of Solomon.

Ch. VIII. 1. The residence of Samuel was near to the centre of the country; and not being able to travel about as he had done, he fixed his sons, as his assistants, in the Southern extremity of it. This was much more populous

populous than the Northern parts, which were held in a great measure by the Canaanites.

4. Notwithstanding their wish to have a king, they would not appoint one themselves, but applied to Samuel for that purpose. Had they found upright judges, it is probable they would not have thought of this measure, for which there was no provision in their original laws; tho' the case being there supposed, and some instructions given concerning the office, they might reasonably conclude that the thing was not uniaawful. All the tribes had never united, and made a common cause against any of their enemies since the time of Joshua; and this desirable end they might hope to gain by the appointment of a king, who should be acknowledged by the whole nation.

7. Had the people conformed in all respects to the Mosaic institutions, there would have been no want of a king; since the Divine Being himself stood in that relation to them, to direct them on all extraordinary occasions; and for the ordinary ones, the priests and the civil judges were sufficient. To ask a king, therefore, was to reject the immediate government of God, and argued a distrust of his attention to them.

18. Here Samuel apprized them of the universal abuses of kingly government, and such as they might expect among themselves, tho' their kings would have no legal right to act in that manner. It will sufficiently appear that the kings of Judah, and even of Israel, were only in the place of the temporary judges they had before; being, as it were, the lieutenants of God, and under

der his direction ; the kings themselves being subject to the laws as well as any other persons.

19. They might think that it would be in their power to guard against the abuses he had mentioned; so that, upon the whole, they would gain more than they would lose by the measure.

22. Notwithstanding their wish to have a king, they were perfectly obedient to God's prophet, and submitted to be directed by him in every thing relating to it.

Ch. IX. 1. In 1 Chron. viii, 37—ix, 39, it is said that Ner begat Kish ; whereas here Kish is said to have been the son of Abiel ; and from 1 Sam. xiv, 51, it appears that Ner and Kish were brothers. The mistake is probably in the genealogy of the book of Chronicles. By *power* in this place is probably meant strength and courage, of which Saul himself had a great share. For the family does not appear to have been wealthy, tho' the word will bear that sense.

4. They searched all the mountainous part of Ephraim, which was to the North of the tribe of Benjamin.

6. They were then come to Rama, where Samuel lived. This was in the tribe of Ephraim, but there were several other places of the same name ; nor can we wonder at this, when it is considered that the word signifies *a high place*, such as many towns are built on. Rome had perhaps its name from the same circumstance.

7. Presents are to this day always expected on a visit to any person of rank or consequence ; not so much on account of the value of them, as a token of respect.

8. Tho' small, it was all that they could command, and it would ~~they~~ their respect, and good will, as well as if it had been of more value.

9. The term *Nabi*, here used for a prophet, was in use in the time of Moses, tho' the word which signifies a *seer*, happened to be in use at the time of this event. This observation was probably made by some person who copied the book for public use afterwards.

12. At this time occasional sacrifices were made at various places, chiefly on elevated ground, which afterwards grew into a great abuse.

13. After the sacrifice of peace offerings, the offerer and his friends feasted on the parts that did not belong to the priest.

20. He informed him concerning the asses before he mentioned them himself, from which it would be evident that he was divinely inspired.

21. This seems an amiable modesty in Saul, who was far from imagining that he should be the person chosen for king; both his tribe and his family being inconsiderable.

24. This appears to have been considered as a choice part in the East. The right shoulder belonged to the priest. This therefore must have been the left. As his future sovereign, Samuel shewed Saul all the respect that he could.

Ch. X. 1—*inheritance; and thou shalt bear rule over the people of the Lord, and thou shalt save them out of the hands of their enemies. And this shall be a sign unto thee, that the Lord hath anointed thee to be a prince over his heritage.* LXX. VULG.

It

It is quite uncertain on what idea, or principle, the custom of *anointing* a person to an office was introduced. It was used at the consecration of Aaron, and is referred to by Jotham Jud. ix, 8. The oil here used was common oil, and not that which had been consecrated, and appropriated to the use of the sanctuary; tho' Solomon seems to have been anointed with this oil, 1 Kings, i, 39. A kiss, in some form or other, was a token of reverence and subjection. Thus Ps. ii, 12, *Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish.*

7. All these things coming to pass as the prophet had foretold, would convince Saul that what Samuel had done was by divine direction. For no person, from his own knowledge or conjecture, could have foretold all these circumstances.

9. This was probably a degree of courage and confidence in himself which he had not had before, and which his interview with Samuel would naturally give him, tho' it is here ascribed to God, as the author of all things.

10. The prophets were probably persons who formed themselves into a society for the study of the law, and the practice of devotional exercises, and who in the course of their instruction were called *the sons of the prophets*. They were at this time probably singing some devout hymns, and Saul joined them in it.

12. It excited much surprize to see Saul among these prophets, as his father had not been of that society, and he had not been educated for it by any other person who might have been so called.

16 This

16. This shews modesty and discretion in Saul. If he was really appointed to be king, it could not fail to appear in due time ; and if not, he would have exposed himself to ridicule.

20. Since the pre-eminence of all the tribes was promised to Judah, it would appear extraordinary that the tribe of Benjamin, which had been almost extinct, should be preferred. From this circumstance, however, it might have been inferred that the royalty was always to remain in his family.

22. Out of modesty he had concealed himself, and did not chuse to appear till he was called for.

23. As men are naturally struck with the advantages of person, this would be a favourable circumstance for Saul.

24. The divine appointment of a king would prevent all competition and cabal.

25. This manner of the kingdom was probably a different thing from the account of the abuses of kingly government recited before. It was perhaps an account of the proper duties of a king, and of the laws to which he would be subject.

26. There was no occasion for particular inspiration. Young men of spirit would naturally attach themselves to their prince, in expectation of employment and preferment.

27. That the choice should not be universally approved is not extraordinary, but as it was evidently of God, these must have been persons of a profane and loose character. Saul, however, shewed great discretion in taking no notice of this discontent.

Ch. II. 1. Jabesh Gilead belonged to the tribe of Manassah, bordering upon the Ammonites, who probably again laid claim to the country of which they had been dispossessed by the Amorites.

3. There was shocking cruelty in this proposal, and great contempt of the power of the Israelites, in giving them this respite.

5 It is evident from this that Saul had not as yet taken upon him any royal state.

6. He felt a strong indignation at the cruel treatment of his countrymen and subjects ; and this is perhaps all that was meant by the historian.

8. Here there appears to have been a real union of all the tribes, of which we find no other example since the time of Joshua, besides that in the war with the tribe of Benjamin.

10. This was a stratagem, feigning to despair of any relief, and therefore signifying that they were ready to submit to the conditions imposed upon them.

13. There was great generosity in the behaviour of Saul on this occasion, worthy of a prince.

15. Notwithstanding the general wish of the people to have a king, and their having made no objection to the divine appointment of Saul, they do not seem to have paid much attention to him, till they found by experience how well qualified he was to serve them in that capacity, having shewn equal courage and good conduct.

Ch. XII. 1. There is great propriety in this address of Samuel on resigning his office of judge, delivered in the presence of Saul, who was now established in the

kingdom, and of the heads of the nation ; making them acknowledge that it was not owing to any oppression or misconduct of his that they had wished for a change in the form of their government.

11. *And Barak and Jephtha* LXX.

Having vindicated his own conduct, he justifies that of God, whose assistance had never been wanting when, by their obedience to his laws, or their repentance for their disobedience, they were, by his promise, intitled to it.

12. Having hitherto found deliverance in all the difficulties in which they had been involved, they ought not to have despaired of it now ; and therefore there was no good reason for wishing to have a king.

14. Notwithstanding their rejection of God for their immediate sovereign, if they and their king would be obedient to God, he would continue to them his protection and blessing.

18. This was an evident proof that their conduct had been displeasing to God in desiring a king, tho' he had complied with their request. Thunder and rain in the summer is very uncommon in Palestine. This kind of weather is generally in the winter only.

25. Considering how often they had fallen into the idolatrous worship of the neighbouring nations, there was great reason for this earnest exhortation, and faithful warning with respect to their future conduct.

Ch. XIII. 1. The years of Saul's age at the time of his being made king, as well as the years of his reign, have been dropped by some means out of the text ; nor are they to be found in the antient versions, save that one
Greek

Greek reading has thirty years for the former number.

DR. GEDD s. The Syriac has *when he had reigned one or two years*, and the Arabic *when he had reigned two or three years, he chose him three thousand men, &c.* and this is not improbable.

2. Michmash was nine miles from Jerusalem, near Rama.

3. Geba was a different place from Gibeah, but both of them were in the tribe of Benjamin.

5. They were, no doubt, alarmed at the union of the nation under a king, and at his success against the Ammonites, and therefore exerted themselves to the utmost.

12. If a sacrifice was necessary on this occasion, and Samuel could not have attended, Saul might have employed some priest to perform the office. He must have known that it did not belong to him.

14. It was, no doubt, in the divine councils finally to establish the kingdom in the tribe of Judah; but Saul and his family might have enjoyed it much longer if he had shewn a proper disposition, the most important article in which was a perfect and ready obedience to all the commands of God. But these he transgressed both on this occasion, and, as we shall see, in the war with the Amalekites afterwards. However, the guilt of Saul on this occasion appears so small, that some suppose that all that Samuel did at this time was to threaten him with the loss of the kingdom in case of future disobedience. Others think that the expedition against Amalec preceded what is here related.

15. *Samuel arose and went to Gilgat; but the rest of the people went after Saul, to meet the men of war; and when they were come from Gilgal to Gibeah of Benjamin, Saul numbered the people.* LXX.

16. It is something extraordinary that tho' when Saul went against the Ammonites he had mustered three hundred thousand men, he had now no more than six hundred. He either had lost his authority, or the people must have been seized with an unaccountable dread of the Philistines.

18. The LXX have the *valley of hyenas*, instead of *Zeboim*.

19. This destitute condition of the Israelites is not reconcileable with the arming of three hundred thousand men in the expedition against the Ammonites; for they certainly would not go without arms, and it was but a short time before this; except on the supposition that after the war with the Ammonites the Philistines had recovered their possession of the country, tho' nothing is said of it in the history. Their being in possession of a garrison in Geba is another proof of the same thing, as well as of the great dread the people were in of them at this time.

23. The *passage of Michmash* is supposed to have been a valley between that city and Gibeah, both being situated on hills. Into this valley they might descend, in order to challenge the Israelites to fight them.

Ch. XIV. 1. Jonathan was at Gibeah, and the Philistines on the opposite hill, at Michmash.

10. It is evident that Jonathan was a man of great piety as well as courage; but whether he had any supernatural

pernatural impulse, that led him to speak and act as he did on this occasion, does not appear.

14. *Twenty men with darts, and stones, and flints of the field.* CONJ. Ho. K.

15. They were astonished at the courage of Jonathan; and well knowing the power of the God of Israel, imagined, no doubt, that this was a prelude to some great advantage over them. Nothing else but this sudden terror can account for their dispersion, evidently before they were attacked by Saul.

16. *And they went hither and thither,* LXX.

18. The LXX has *bearing the sacred ephod*. Some think that this was not the ark of the covenant, the proper place of which was the holy of holies in the tabernacle, but another ark, or chest, which contained the ephod with the urim and thummim; the ark of the covenant being at that time at the house of Aminadab. But tho' this might be its place in general it might be taken out on particular occasions, and carried back again. It is evident that David took it with him when in flying from his son Absalom he left Jerusalem, tho' he soon sent it back.

19. The dispersion of the Philistines, and the advantage it gave to the Israelites, was so evident, that Saul bade the priest desist from his consultation, that they might without delay proceed to action.

23. *Bethaven and the men of Israel with Saul were about ten thousand.* LXX.

Bethaven was to the West of Michmash. The Philistines retreated towards their own country.

24. This resolution was, no doubt, well intended;
but

but he did not foresee the difficulty into which his army would be brought in consequence of it.

31. This was to the very border of the land of the Philistines.

33. His design seems to have been, that all the cattle being killed at one place, it might be seen that they were killed properly, and the blood drained from them, which had not been attended to before. But the Hebrew phraseology implies not that they ate the blood itself, but at or near the blood, as if it had been in conformity to a heathen rite; and therefore Saul ordered that all the cattle should be killed in one place, in order to prevent it.

35. This might be either for sacrifice on this great occasion, or as a monument of his victory.

38. He concluded from his receiving no answer, that some crime had been committed.

43. He proceeded exactly as Joshua had done in the case of Achan, and the Divine Being was pleased to guide the lots.

44. There was great magnanimity in the resolution of Saul; for his affection of his son cannot be questioned. He must have thought that a regard to his oath required such a sacrifice.

47. This is a summary account of all the wars of Saul, but what time they took up is not said.

Ch. XV. 1. After the preceeding general account of the transactions of the reign of Saul, in which he appears to advantage, the historian proceeds to some particulars of a different kind, especially his disobedience

to the commands of God, and his rejection on that account.

3. This sentence upon the Amalekites was pronounced long before, when, without any provocation, they attacked the Israelites on their marching out of Egypt, Exod. xvii, 14; and it was renewed on their entrance into the land of Canaan, with a charge not to forget it; so that Saul could not plead ignorance, and he was now expressly directed to carry the threatening into full effect.

4. This was the force of all the nation united.

5. *And went down into the valley.* MSS.

6. These Kenites were the descendants of Jethro, some of whom had removed from the neighbourhood of Jericho to the mountainous parts of Judah, to the South of which lived the Amalekites; tho' as they before joined the Midianites, some of them may have been situated to the South of the Dead sea, on the other side of Jordan. Some of the Kenites appear to have lived among the Amalekites, as others did among the Israelites; just as the Turkmans now live in Persia, an independent people, observing their own laws and customs, tho' in friendship with the people among whom they live.

7. This was the country from which the Amalekites attacked the Israelites. They bordered on Egypt as far as the wilderesses would permit.

8. As they had received positive orders to destroy every thing, the same that Joshua had received with respect to Jericho, it was the duty of Saul, without making himself a judge of the measure, to obey it punctually.

tually. He did not pretend that he did not know the order, or question its having come from God.

11. We see here the sincere affection that Samuel had for Saul, and that the measure for setting him aside was far from being his, in order to get another more submissive to him, as some unbelievers have pretended.

12. *Set him up a pillar, i. e. a memorial of his victory.* C.

This Carmel was a city in the mountainous part of Judah, where Nabal, called the Carmelite, lived, *Ch. xxvii, 3. Josh. xv, 55.* Here perhaps he intended, besides erecting some monument of his victory, to divide the spoil that he had brought away.

13. He probably thought he had done all that was essential in the service required of him, and expected to be commended for it.

21. He alleged in his excuse, that he could not restrain the people from taking the spoil; which implies that he did not think it right. He ought at least to have remonstrated against their conduct, and have refused to give his sanction to it.

22. This is quoted by our Saviour, and is a maxim of great importance, and of extensive application, viz. that obedience to the express commands of God is not to be dispensed with on any consideration; and that every thing of a ceremonial nature ought to give place to things of a moral nature, these being more expressly enjoined than any other.

23. That is, disobedience to the commands of God is a crime as heinous as idolatry, of which divination and witchcraft were parts.

31. What Samuel had said to Saul, was, no doubt, to himself alone, and that nothing of this might appear to the people, he joined in the sacrifice with Samuel.

32. — *came to him out of his chains.* CONJ. HO.

33. This, tho' perhaps done by another, yet being done by the order of Samuel, it might be said to have been done by himself. Or he might kill Agag with his own hands, to shew that there was no service, however disagreeable, that ought to be declined when God commanded it. Its being said to be done *before the Lord*, implies that it was at the place where they had been sacrificing, and performing other acts of religion. The address to Agag implies that he had been a cruel tyrant, and had put many to death unjustly. But this is not necessary to the vindication of the justice of God in punishing nations for crimes committed by them in distant periods.

35. Tho' Samuel kept aloof from Saul, he did not lose his affection for him, and was far from stirring up any rebellion against him. He was to reign till his death.

Ch. XVI. 2. It is evident that Samuel offered sacrifices in various places, and not always at the sanctuary. Saul, knowing that the kingdom would be taken from his family, became suspicious and cruel; tho' he must have known that he could not defeat the purpose of God. Samuel is here instructed how to avoid giving suspicion to Saul; and where miracles were not necessary, recourse is not had to them.

5. Saul, who was distinguished by his personal ap-

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pearance

pearance, having been made king, Samuel would naturally expect that his successor would be possessed of a similar advantage.

10. *Six of his sons*, Conj. C.

12. This ruddiness might be either in his hair, or his countenance ; but tho' the former was generally admired by the antients, I am inclined to think that the latter was intended.

13 This probably was not done in the presence of his brothers, but privately, and when he was *taken out from them*, as the words may be rendered, for this purpose. It is supposed that David was about twenty years of age at this time, and from this time he probably felt such sentiments of courage and generosity, as the knowledge of his future destination would necessarily inspire him with. Supernatural inspiration is not necessarily understood. Samuel did not say for what purpose he anointed David. Had it been known to all the family, his eldest brother would hardly have insulted him as he did when he went to the camp, Ch. xvii. 20; and had it been generally known it might have had many disagreeable consequences.

14. Saul grew suspicious, peevish, and melancholy, which was probably all that was meant by *the spirit of God leaving him, and an evil spirit from God troubling him*, both being equally ascribed to God.

16. They could not well suppose that music could drive away a real evil spirit, sent by God to afflict any person. They must, therefore, have considered the case of Saul as a natural disease, and they recommend a natural remedy.

11. As

18. As David is here called a valiant man, he could not have been the *stripling* that some suppose him to have been at that time.

20. Without a present to shew his respect, he could not go into the presence of his king.

Ch. XVII. 1. This was probably soon after David had been introduced to Saul.

4. This is more than ten of our feet. But it is not incredible, as there have been particular persons in later times nearly as tall, and strong in proportion. A person of the name of John Middleton, in the time of James I. of England, was more than nine feet high. A copy of the picture taken from the life, and now at Brazen-nose College, Oxford, may be seen at Hale, a village near Warrington in Lancashire where he was born. Plott in his *History of Staffordshire*, says of him, that "his hand, from the carpus to the end of the middle finger, was seventeen inches, his palms eight inches and an half broad, and his whole height nine feet three inches, wanting," he says, "but six inches of the height of Goliath of Gath." The picture at Hale, which I have seen, corresponds with the account of Plott, and represents him as large in proportion.

8. Challenges to single combat were not unfrequent in antient times, when armies stood opposed to each other.

12. This verse, and all to the 31st, is omitted in some copies of the LXX; and as it is inconsistent with the rest of the narrative, it was probably taken from another account of the same transaction that was in part true, so that the compiler of the history, not chusing to omit

omit it, incorporated it with the other, notwithstanding their inconsistency, of which he left the reader to judge.

25. *By free* was probably meant freedom from paying tribute.

35. David must have been a strong and active man to have done this, tho' he could not be thought a match for Goliath.

39—*armour, but he was weary.* LXX.

40. The Benjamites excelled in the use of the sling; and tho' to a person unpractised in it, it may seem impossible to take any tolerable aim with such an instrument; yet it is evident from history that many whole nations have been exceedingly expert in the use of it; so as to hit a mark with a great degree of certainty; and the force with which a stone may be thrown with a sling is well known to be very great.

43. This conference before the fighting of single combatants was common with the antients. There are many examples of it in Homer,

49. David must, no doubt, have had great confidence in his use of the sling; but if he had missed his mark, after throwing all his five stones, yet not being loaded with heavy armour, he could have ensured his safety by flight.

50. This verse to the 5th of the next chapter, except the 55th, not being in the LXX, was probably part of the other account of this transaction; and the truth of it may be admitted as far as it is not inconsistent with the other. Indeed, the whole of this account may be true if David was not known to Saul at this time.

Which

Which of the two accounts is most to be depended upon, we have no means of judging at this distance of time.

54. Jerusalem was not then in the possession of the Israelites, and therefore this must be an interpolation, tho' in the LXX.

Ch. XVIII. I. This account of the friendship of David and Jonathan, tho' not in the Vatican copy of the LXX, is so agreeable to the rest of the history, that I cannot question its authenticity.

4. To change garments with a person is the greatest honour that a prince, or great man, can confer upon another. *Fragments*, Vol. iv, p. 189.

6. We have seen on other occasions how women took the lead in songs and dances on public occasions.

8. If not at this time, yet soon after, Saul suspected, or had been informed, that David was the person who was appointed to succeed him.

10—11—These verses are wanting in the Vatican LXX. Saul was probably repeating some sacred hymns, which David accompanied with his instrument. Had Saul really intended to kill David in the manner described in this place, he would hardly have given him a command in the army, as mentioned v. 13. These verses, therefore, were probably part of another narrative of the life of David, and of which part of the account of his combat with Goliath was taken.

17. This artful behaviour of Saul is not consistent with his endeavouring to kill him with his own hand. However, this verse and the two following are not in the Vatican copy of the LXX; and the account they contain

tain of Saul promising David his daughter Merab, then giving her to another, and immediately after giving him his daughter Michal, is a conduct so inconsistent with itself, that it is not at all probable.

23. David thought that something considerably more than he could afford must have been given for the honour of marrying the king's daughter.

27. *One hundred men*. LXX. See v. xxv, 2 Sam. iii. 14. W. According to the common reading he more than fulfilled the terms required of him.

Ch. XIX. 1, There is a most pleasing generosity in the conduct of Jonathan, especially when it is considered that, by some means or other, he was acquainted with David's being appointed to be king after the death of his father.

10. This was probably the time that Saul endeavoured to kill David; and from this time he never ceased to persecute him.

13. This must have been a large image in the form of a man's head, tho' probably not a complete statue; and it had, no doubt, been used for some superstitious purpose. There is much uncertainty in the rendering of the word כְּבִיר, and the antient versions differ much from each other. It was either a pillow of goats hair, or the long hair of a goat so fastened to the image as to represent human hair. The version of the LXX, which is a *liver*, is very unlikely to be the meaning of the passage.

17. This was not true, but said by way of excuse for himself.

19. Naioth seems to have been a place near to Ramoth, where there was a school of the prophets, in which young men were educated in the study of the law, and trained to pious exercises.

20. They probably joined in their hymns.

23. He seems to have felt a divine impulse even before he came to the place. Their singing was accompanied with much gesticulation, called dancing. Thus David afterwards danced before the ark ; and in order to perform this exercise with more ease, he threw off his upper garment, as did Saul on this occasion.

24. The term *naked* only means being without the upper garment. This proverb is said, Ch. x, 12, to have had its origin on a former occasion of a similar nature.

Ch. XX. 1. This persecution of David by Saul is supposed to have begun about five years before the death of Saul.

5. There were more sacrifices than usual on the new moons ; and being peace offerings, the offerers feasted their friends upon them. By this, however, it appears that Saul did not neglect the rites of his religion. These sacrifices, could not well, however, have been made at the sanctuary, since the feast was at Saul's own house.

6. From this it appears that the custom of sacrificing and feasting monthly or annually was common in the country. This was an artifice which David, no doubt, thought to be justifiable ; but no departure from strict truth is to be commended, or imitated.

13. Jonathan well knew that David was to be king as his father had been, and yet took no umbrage at it.

19. This was perhaps a pillar to shew the way, since the name imports *going* or *travelling*.

25. *And Jonathan arose and sat down*, i. e. took his place at the table. *Sra.*

26. This being a feast upon a sacrifice, no person who was legally unclean, as by the touch of a dead body, &c. could partake of it.

29. When the father was dead, his authority in the family devolved upon his eldest son. He had the power of disposing of his sisters in marriage.

30. Saul did not intend any reflection on Jonathan's mother by this language. It was a kind of proverbial expression, to denote a perverse and reprobate character. This mode of abuse is still common in the East.

31. By some means or other Saul must have been apprized that David was to succeed him.

33. In general, the word that is here rendered *to smite*, signifies to kill; but, enraged as Saul was, he could hardly have intended to kill his own son.

34. Notwithstanding Jonathan's defence of his father, he did not fail to express proper repentment of this his brutal behaviour.

41. More ceremony is used in the East than in the Western part of the world; but on this occasion it may seem to have been unnecessary between such intimate friends.

Ch. XXI. 1. Mention is made of Nob as a city of Benjamin, Neh. xi, 32, and this being Saul's tribe, he had

had perhaps got the tabernacle erected there. This would of course make it a place of resort for many priests, tho' it was not a Levitical city. Ahimelech is supposed to have been the brother of Ahijah mentioned 1 Ch. xiv, 3, &c. as the son of Phinehas, the son of Eli, and to have succeeded to the highpriesthood after the death of his brother, tho' he is never called the highpriest, but only a priest.

2. There was in this a departure from truth, which cannot be approved.

4. The shew bread, being the property of the priests, could not legally be eaten by any besides persons of his family ; but in cases of urgent necessity the highpriest justly thought that this ceremonial might be dispensed with. He wished, however, that the persons who partook of it should be as free as might be from any legal defilement:

5. Not only were the men themselves free from any legal impurity, but their vessels too. For these were subject to various causes of defilement, as well as the persons who used them. The bread being taken from the table of shew bread, David considered it as in a manner, tho' not intirely, holy.

7. He might be at the sanctuary on account of some act of religion. In the LXX this Doeg is called a *Syrian*, and the difference between this word in the Hebrew and an *Edomite*, is very small ; so that the one might be easily mistaken for the other.

9. This sword, tho' it had belonged to Goliath, might not be of any extraordinary size. The Roman soldiers had two swords, a longer and a shorter one, or a dagger.

10. It is rather extraordinary that David should fly for refuge to the Philistines, to whom he must have been very obnoxious. But this was perhaps the nearest place to which he had at that time an opportunity of flying.

15. In all the Eastern countries great respect is to this day paid to all persons disordered in mind. They are thought to be under the more immediate care of God, and sometimes to be inspired by him.

Ch. XXII. 1. This was a strong hold in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv, 33—1 Chron. xi, 13.

2. It does not necessarily follow from this description of David's attendants, that they were lawless dishonest persons, living by rapine; but only men oppressed with debts, as the Roman populace often were. David being generally beloved, might easily find the means of subsistence for himself and them in the benevolence of his friends; and where they were settled for any time, they might subsist by their labour or by hunting.

3. The Moabites were at variance with Saul, Ch. xiv, 47, and on this account he might expect to be better received among them. It was the country to which Elimelech his ancestor had fled in the time of a famine, and Ruth, his great-grand-mother, was of that country.

5. Gad, being a prophet, might be divinely inspired in giving this advice.

8. Saul's extreme jealousy made him think every person about him in league with David.

10. This was not mentioned before; but by the confession

cession of Abimelech afterwards seems to have been true.

15. This is not the first time that, with the knowledge of Saul, he had inquired of God for him.

18. There being no public executioners in antient times, this disagreeable office was often performed by persons of condition, as now by Doeg, who was one of Saul's chief officers:

19. We see here to what an extremity of injustice and cruelty the jealousy of men in power can carry them; and this is by no means the only instance of the kind recorded in history. He treated this place worse than he had done the country of the Amalekites.

Ch XXIII. 1. This was a city in the tribe of Judah.

2. This was perhaps by the prophet Gad. For Abiathar who had the ephod, did not arrive till David was at Keilah. David shewed his regard to his own country, in opposing the Philistines, when he stood in need of their protection.

4. In whatever manner the inquiry was made, the answer was delivered in an articulate voice.

6. Place this verse after v. 1. Ho.

Abiathar being in fear of his life, and taking refuge with David, took the sacred ephod along with him, as it was necessary, according to the laws of Moses, to put it on whenever he inquired of God; and for this he might presume there would be much occasion in the state of David's affairs.

10. These were probably delivered by the mouth of

Abiathar when he had put on the ephod ; for such a proceeding the established ritual required.

12. How distinct and intelligible are these answers, compared with the oracles of the heathens, which were always ambiguous and obscure.

13. Many of David's followers had probably left him at this time, as he could not have kept himself concealed with so great a number as six hundred men. But it appears that they joined him afterwards, for they again amounted to the same number of six hundred.

17. From this it is evident that both Saul and Jonathan were acquainted with the designation of David to be king, and Jonathan was well contented to be next to him.

25. That is, a rocky, or mountainous, part of the country.

28. The word signifies *the rock of division*, perhaps from this separation of David from Saul by the intervention of this mountain.

Ch. XXIV. 1. From this it appears that Saul had at this time driven the Philistines out of the country.

3. He retired to refresh himself with sleep ; and to lie down with the greater decency, he drew his long garments over his feet.

6. There does not appear to have been sufficient reason for David's reproaching himself in this manner. He seems to have considered every person anointed to an office by divine direction as sacred, and therefore inviolable.

8. David was now at the mercy of Saul, but having shown

shewn his own generosity with respect to him, he trusted that no ungenerous advantage would be taken of it.

11. He was his father, both as his prince and his father-in-law, having married his daughter.

14. He represents himself as an object wholly insignificant, and unworthy of his notice.

22. The generous conduct of David naturally awakened sentiments of generosity in Saul. But David knowing his temper, did not so far confide in him as to put himself again into his power, nor did he require of Saul an oath for his safety.

Ch. XXV. 1. According to Josephus he governed after the death of Eli twelve years, and lived eighteen in the reign of Saul. But Sir J. Marsham supposes that he judged Israel sixteen years before the accession of Saul, and lived eighteen years after that. The wilderness of Paran was in the Southern part of Judah, near to Arabia, whither he could easily retire. It was at this time, no doubt, that *he sojourned at Meshech, and dwelt in the tents of Kedar*; Ps. cxx, 5, Kedar being in Arabia.

2. There were two Carmels, one in the Northern part of the country. But this must have been in the Southern part of the tribe of Judah.

3. He was descended from Caleb, cotemporary with Joshua. But as the word Caleb signifies *dog*, the LXX render it a man of a dog-like disposition.

7. This shews that the followers of David did not live by plunder; and in this, considering their situation, there was some merit.

13. If any of the six hundred men that he had originally had left him, they seem to have joined him again. At least, he had the same number as before.

17. A *son of Belial* was a phrase to denote a man of a reprobate character, as if he had been descended from an evil being. But what were the ideas affixed to the word *Belial* is uncertain.

22. David cannot be justified in this measure. For tho' Nabal had refused his reasonable request, he had not done him any positive injury.

25. The word *Nabal* signifies *foolish*.

28. It was well understood, at least throughout Judah, that David was to be king after the death of Saul. To soften his resentment, she represents herself as the offender, putting herself in the place of her husband.

37. He was deeply affected at the danger he had so narrowly escaped.

38. Tho' he probably died of a natural disease, to which the terror he was in might contribute, it is, as all events in the language of scripture are, ascribed to God.

44. Tho' she had been taken from him, David afterwards took her again. The Jewish doctors suppose that Phalti, considering her as the legal wife of David, had not co-habited with her.

Ch. XXVI 1. These people had on a former occasion given Saul information where David had concealed himself, Ch xxiii, 19; and they would naturally be apprehensive lest David should remember the ill office they had done him if he should be king, and therefore wished to prevent it.

2 The jealousy of Saul must have been most unreasonable, after the generous behaviour of David in the cave.

5. He might be sleeping in a chariot, as the word is translated in the LXX.

6. It appears from this, and the history of Uriah who was also a Hittite, that many of the seven devoted nations had conformed to the religion of the Hebrews, and were not only tolerated, but preferred according to their merit.

They were the sons of David's sister, 1 Ch. ii, 16

10. David could not but wish the death of Saul, but he would not himself have any hand in it. Had he given himself an example of putting to death a person anointed king by divine authority, it might have been followed with respect to himself.

12. A deep sleep from God may only mean a very deep sleep, the term *God* being often used as an augmentative; as in the phrases, *mountains of God*, *rivers of God*, and *trees of God*, signifying that they were large mountains, rivers and trees.

19. If David had committed any offence against God, which had been the cause of his persecution by Saul, he might have been appeased by an offering; but as they were men that had infligated him, he wished some evil might befall them. To drive him from the land of Israel among heathens was to lay him under a temptation to serve other gods.

20. Bochart and Le Clerc prove that the word rendered *partridge*, signifies the *woodcock*.

25. This second instance of David's generosity had for the time its proper effect on the mind of Saul; but David could not place intire confidence in him.

Ch. XXVII. 1. Well knowing Saul's rooted jealousy and hatred, he durst not trust to any promise he made him; but knowing that he himself was appointed by God to succeed him, there does not appear to have been any good reason for his leaving the country. Saul could not touch his life.

2. This was probably the same Achish to whom he had gone before; and tho' it was now evident that he was no madman, he might think that the long continued enmity between him and Saul was a sufficient pledge for his fidelity, even in a war with his own country.

6. This town was in the tribe of Judah, and was afterwards given to that of Simeon, but the Philistines had got possession of it.

7. Some think that, according to the Hebrew, David remained at Ziklag only some days more than four months. He came thither after the death of Samuel, and left the place after that of Saul; and only seven months are thought to have intervened between these events.

8. The Geshurites, and Gerizites, were the remains of the Canaanitish nations, devoted to destruction. Many of the Amalekites, no doubt, escaped when Saul invaded their country. With these people the Philistines might be at variance, at least they might have no connection with them; so that David being at war with them might give the Philistines no umbrage.

12 David

12. David certainly deceived Achish; but tho' he left neither man nor woman alive, it is very extraordinary that the truth should not have reached the Philistines, some of whom must have been at no great distance from the scene of the transaction.

Ch. XXVIII. 1. Achish had no distrust of David.

2. He answers with a studied ambiguity.

3. Saul appears to have been sufficiently attentive to the observance of his religion. What he did with respect to persons pretending to witchcraft, &c, was in conformity to the precepts of Moses. See Ch. xx, 27.

4. This was in the tribe of Issachar, which was in the Northern part of Palestine, from which it appears that the Philistines were in possession of a great part of it.

6. As Saul had been disobedient to the orders given him by Samuel, and had put to death a great number of priests, God left him to his own councils, without giving him, as before, any instruction, in any of the three ways that are here mentioned.

7. Notwithstanding his general adherence to his religion, he was not wholly without faith in some articles of the heathen worship, to which he had recourse in this emergency. Endor was in the tribe of Manasseh; and this woman being known to reside there, and living probably by her art, is a proof that many of the Israelites were addicted to these practices.

8. The art to which this woman pretended was *necromancy*, or bringing up persons from the dead; and as it could not have been the *body* that was supposed to be raised, they must at this time have had the idea of a *ghost*, as something visible, and resembling the living person

person, tho' not tangible. It was also supposed to reside under the ground, from whence it was called up, tho' not necessarily near the place where the body had been buried. For Samuel was not buried at Endor; and she proposed to bring up where they then were, any person that Saul should name.

12. By the terror with which this woman was seized it appears to me to be most probable, that it pleased God really to raise Samuel, contrary to her expectations. And from some circumstance or other she concluded that it was Saul that had applied to her.

13. At first Samuel appeared only to the woman, and she considered him in the light of an awful majestic person; for such is sometimes the meaning of the word that is here rendered *God*.

14. Saul might know that it was Samuel by her description of him; but as the language was addressed to Saul, it is probable that afterwards he saw him also.

19. This is so exactly in the very manner in which we may suppose Samuel to have addressed Saul on this occasion, and the prediction was so exactly verified, that I cannot think there was any imposition of the woman in the case. Had the scene been a mere contrivance of hers, she would certainly have given him a more favourable answer, at least an ambiguous one, like those of the heathen oracles; whereas nothing could be more distinct and intelligible, as well as more ungrateful, than this language of Samuel.

Ch. XXIX. 1. There were three places of this name, one in the tribe of Judah, another in that of Manasseh, and

and a third in that of Asher. This last is supposed to be that which is intended here.

4. This *king* does not seem to have had much more power than those who are here called *princes* of the Philistines.

11. This was the place in which the Israelites were encamped.

XXXI. This advantage they had taken in the absence of David.

6. He had given the Amalekites great provocation by his cruelty to them, and he had left the place without sufficient guard.

8. How clear and intelligible is this answer, compared with those of the heathen oracles.

14. The Cherethites were part of the Philistines. The Arabs, it is said, now call their country *Keritha*. The land of Caleb was probably Hebron, where Caleb had his inheritance.

20. Besides recovering what he had lost, he got all their plunder of other places.

22. It is evident from this, that many of David's followers were men of very indifferent characters.

25. A certain part of the spoil was given to those who were not engaged in the war with the Midianites, Num. 31; but it was not equal to that of those who were engaged. For sixty thousand who staid at home had no more than the twelve thousand who went to fight. But then they who staid at home were in no danger; whereas in this case had the four hundred been defeated, the two hundred must have been cut off, being unable

able to fly. Here too they were prevented from fighting by absolute inability, occasioned by their exertions in the same expedition. Their case was, therefore, the same with that of men wounded and disabled in the service.

26. The plunder of this camp must have been very considerable ; and the greater part of it appears to have been at the disposal of David. By this means he could not fail to make many friends.

27. This seems to have been the same place that is called Baalath, and Kerjath Baal, Josh. xv. 9.—60. South Rama was in the tribe of Simeon. Jattir was in that of Judah, Josh. xv. 48.

28. This was Aroer beyond Jordan; and as David once fled for refuge to the land of Moab, he might be under some obligation to the inhabitants of this Aroer, tho' there was another place of the same name in the tribe of Judah, where also the Jerahmeelites lived Ch. xxxii. 10; and where Rachal, and the other places here mentioned, probably were.

Ch. XXXI. 1. The battle was fought in the valley of Jezrael, and the next mountains were those of Gilboa.

2. Had Jonathan lived, all those who adhered to Ishbosheth would, no doubt, have preferred him to David.

3. The Hebrew may be rendered *he was terrified*, not actually wounded. *Un. Hist.*

10. It was customary with the ancients to place trophies of their victories in their temples ; both as places
of

of security, and by way of acknowledgment of the assistance of their gods. It is also usual in the East to expose criminals upon hooks fastened in the walls of cities, where they expire in torture. The body of Saul was probably exposed upon such hooks.

12. The inhabitants of this place had been rescued from the most cruel and ignominious treatment by the valour of Saul in the beginning of his reign. It was on the other side of Jordan, and, therefore, they must have used great expedition in crossing the river. So far, however, they might have come in the day time, and have proceeded to Bethshean in the night.

13. Having burned the body, they buried the bones and ashes that remained.

NOTES

NOTES ON THE SECOND BOOK OF
S A M U E L.

CHAP. I. 2. This was customary in cases of deep affliction. Sometimes they carried earth. Bruce says that he saw some vanquished rebels in Abyssinia carrying stones upon their heads by way of acknowledging their guilt.

8. Whether this man was really an Amalekite or not, we may infer from the story that it was no extraordinary thing for some of that nation, as well of the seven devoted nations, to live with the Israelites, conforming, no doubt, to their religion. For had he known that he was at all obnoxious on that account, he would not have voluntarily confessed it.

16. This man, no doubt, thought to give David pleasure by having contributed to the death of his adversary; and had the fact been as he represented it, he had done nothing that was justly reprehensible. David makes his guilt to consist in his killing the Lord's anointed.

18. The word *bow* is not in the LXX.

The *book of Jasher* seems to have been a collection of poetical compositions, begun perhaps by some person of that name.

27. This song abounds with natural and beautiful images, the most proper imaginable to the occasion.

Ch. II

Ch. II. 1. This was, no doubt, by means of Abiathar, who was then the high-priest. We cannot but again observe the distinctness of the answers to all the questions that David proposed, when compared with the obscurity of the heathen oracles.

4. It does not appear that the rest of the tribes were consulted. Indeed, in all the time of the judges, they had generally acted independently of one another.

8. In 1 Ch. viii, 31, he is called Ethbaal. There are several other names which end indifferently in *baal* or *bosheth*. The latter signifying *shame* or *confusion*, and the former being the name of an idol, they might perhaps be considered by the pious Hebrews as equivalent. Mahanaim was in the tribe of Gad. It was the place in which Jacob had the vision of angels.

10. He must have been born in the year in which Saul was made king. Paul says, Acts xiii, 21, that Saul reigned forty years. The two years here mentioned were probably the time that elapsed before there was any war between David and him. Some suppose that he did not reign more than two years in all, and that five years passed before the rest of the tribes acknowledged David, at least in a formal manner.

12. This looks as if the hostilities began with the partisans of Ishboetheth. The eleven tribes might think to overpower that of Judah only.

16. The most probable meaning is, that each of the champions on the part of David killed his antagonist.

18. Zeruah was David's sister, so that they were his nephews. The animal here alluded to is a species

of antelope, which is remarkably swift and nimble ; commonly called *gazel*.

21. If he wanted to return with some token of his prowess, he might strip some other person.

27. Had Abner requested a cessation of arms before, it would have been granted.

30. From this it is probable that none of David's champions had been killed before the battle. For had they all been killed before, only seven men would have fallen in the battle, which is not probable.

Ch. III. 1. Notwithstanding this contest between the partisans of David and those of Ishbosheth, it does not appear that the war was very destructive, or that many battles were fought between them. It is also evident that they were not molested by the Philistines in these seven years, tho' they had defeated and slain Saul. The reason of this does not appear.

3. This daughter of Talmai was probably a captive taken in the war with the Geshurites, mentioned 1 Sam. xxvii. 8.

5. The Jews suppose that Eglah is only another name for Michal.

7. It was considered as a great offence even to marry the widow of a king, and aspiring to the kingdom ; so we see in the case of Adonijah, who wished to marry Abishag, 2 Kings, ii, 2. Probably, however, Abner had not intended to marry her, and this would give still more offence to the family of Saul.

13. Besides the affection that David had for Michal, his marriage with her would ingratiate him with the Israelites in general, who had a respect for Saul and his family.

14. From this it may seem that David and Ishbosheth were not in a state of hostility at this time. As all that Abner could engage for was to use his influence with Ishbosheth to restore Michal to David, he applies to him for that purpose.

18. As it appears to have been generally known that David was appointed by God to succeed Saul, and he had been very acceptable to the people in general, while Ishbosheth had nothing to recommend himself besides his being the son of Saul, it is rather extraordinary that David should not have been universally acknowledged immediately after the death of Saul.

19. The Benjamites would naturally be more attached to the family of Saul on account of his being of their tribe.

22. His plunder must have been from some of the neighbouring nations, with whom the Israelites were seldom in a state of peace.

26. Josephus says that this was twenty furlongs from Hebron.

27. Besides this revenge of his brother's death for which there was nothing to blame in the conduct of Abner, Joab might apprehend that he would supplant him in the esteem of David.

33. He did not die either as a criminal, or a prisoner taken in war, but by the treachery of a wicked man.

38. David must have been in the power of Joab as much as Ishbosheth was in that of Abner, to condemn his conduct as he did, and yet not be able to punish him for it.

Ch. IV. 2. It was then in the hands of the Philistines.

3. Where this Gittaim was is not known.

12. This behaviour of David was equally just and politic, as it would tend to conciliate the friends of the house of Saul. This cruel punishment is common in the East. Lady Wortley Montague says that if a Turkish minister displease the people, they cut off his head, feet, and hands, and throw them before the palace gate.

Ch. V. 2. As they were acquainted with the designation of David to be king, it is extraordinary that they should not have come to him before.

5. He must have made this conquest of Jerusalem in the first year of his reign over all Israel.

5—6 Dr. Kennicot has taken much pains with this passage, and after a very accurate discussion, and a comparison of it with the parallel passage in 1 Chron. xi, 7, &c. supposes the following to have been the original sense.

And they spake unto David saying. Thou shalt not come hither, for the blind and the lame shall keep thee off, saying David shall not come hither. But David took the strong hold of Zion which is the city of David, and David said on that day, whosoever first smiteth the Jebusites, and through the subteraneous passage reacheth the blind and the lame which are hated of David's soul (because the blind and the lame continued to say he shall not come into this house) shall be head and captain. So Joab the son of Zeruiah went up first, and was head i. e. captain general.

16. Here

16. Here mention is made of no more than nine sons, but in 1 Chron. iii, 8, eleven are named.

18. This is to the West of Jerusalem.

21. It was customary with the heathens to carry the images of their gods along with them in their wars, hoping by this means to engage their assistance. Thus we find 2 Chron. xxv, 14, that the Edomites had their gods with them when they fought with Amaziah. These idols, however, tho' now taken by the Israelites, did them no harm, as the ark had done to the Philistines.

24. This had better be rendered *the mountains of Bochim*, the image of persons walking on the tops of trees being very unnatural.

25. This was to the confines of their own country.

Ch. VI. 2. This is the same with Kirjath-jearim, called also Baalath, Josh. xv, 9, and Kirjath-baal, Josh. xv, 6. There the ark was placed in the house of Abinadab.

3. This was irregular. It ought to have been carried by the priests of the family of Kohath, Numb. vii, 9; and so David himself afterwards said it ought to have been carried, 1 Chron. xv, 2—15; and in this manner it was finally conveyed to Jerusalem.

7. There was, no doubt, something very irregular, and not sufficiently expressive of reverence, in the whole of this proceeding, which it pleased the Divine Being to check by the sudden death of the person who put his hand to the ark that was called by his name.

11. He was afraid lest in consequence of some other inadvertency, the judgment of God should fall upon himself. Obededom was probably called a Gittite from

his being a native of Gathrimmon, which was a Levitical city, Josh. xxi, 25. That he was a Levite appears from 1 Chron. xv, 18—xvi, 5. All this time the ark was without the tabernacle, which after the death of Eli was carried to Nob, and after the death of Samuel to Gibeon, where it remained till the building of the temple.

12. Obededom receiving no injury, but much advantage, from the presence of the ark, it encouraged David to resume his first design of conveying it to Jerusalem.

13. At this time the ark was carried by the priests or Levites. Here, also, it appears that on extraordinary occasions sacrifices were made at other places than at the national altar. But this circumstance is omitted in the antient versions, and instead of it they mention *six choirs*, i. e. of singers and dancers, *with incense and beasts for sacrifice*, accompanying them. That they were actually sacrificed on the way is not probable.

14. He was habited in some measure like the priests, this garment not being peculiar to them, as were those of the highpriest to him.

16. Dancing, tho' a natural expression of joy, was seldom used by men.

17. This was a temporary tabernacle, intended to receive the ark till it could be placed in the temple, which it was his intention to build.

20. Women probably bore a principal part in this dancing; and she thought it indecent in David to dance along with them; not that David was really naked, or that any part of his body was improperly exposed, but he

he had laid aside his upper garment, or his robe, that he might dance with the greater agility.

21. *And David said unto Michal, I will dance before the Lord.* LXX.

22. He was confident that in whatever light his behaviour might appear to her, it would be of no disadvantage to him in the opinion of others.

23. He might cease to cohabit with her on account of this offence that she had given him.

Ch. VII. 2. As God was the proper civil governor of the people, and the idea of his fixing his residence among them was suggested, and kept up, by the erection of the tabernacle, and all the ceremonies of their worship, it was natural for David, a religious and wealthy prince, who had built a palace for himself, to think of providing a better habitation for his God, than the moveable tabernacle, which was constructed in the wilderness, and was adapted to the then unsettled state of the nation; and therefore Nathan approved of the proposal.

7. As the intention of David was good, this answer of the Divine Being could not be intended for a reproof to his presumption; but, tho' generally translated so as to favour that construction, must have been meant to signify his approbation of his having proposed to do a thing which had not been thought of before, or even required of any chief of the nation. That God approved of David's design we see 1 Kings, viii, 18.

10. As God had raised David from a low situation, and established his kingdom, so he would in due time give a permanent establishment to the nation; when they would rest from all their enemies, as he had done

from his. But this promise, or prophecy, refers to the final state of the nation, which has not yet taken place, but which, we may hope, is now at no great distance;

16. This also relates to that future period when a prince of the house of David will rule over the whole nation, after their present dispersion. And tho' the reign of this family was interrupted at the Babylonish captivity, it never intirely failed in the tribe of Judah before that event, whereas there had been several distinct families of the kings of Israel. There were several idolatrous and wicked kings of Judah, who had suffered for their apostacy; but the succession had never failed; Zedekiah, the last of them, being a descendant of David.

18. In the East inferior persons sit before the great on their heels; and in this humble posture it is thought that David might sit before the Lord on this occasion. It was before the ark which was then in Jerusalem.

19. There was no example of such generosity among men.

Ch. VII. 1. *Gath and its villages*, Ho. from 1. Chron. xviii. 21.

Before this time he had only repelled the invasions of the Philistines, but he now invaded and conquered them.

2 This was a fulfilling of the prophecy of Balaam, Num. xxiv, 17, tho' it may relate to a time that is yet future, when the Israelites shall occupy all the country that belonged to the Moabites. He destroyed, or wasted, two thirds of the country; but the reason for this severity does not appear. The Jews say that they slew his parents,

parents, and his brethren, whom he had left with them. The Moabites had, no doubt, been the enemies of the Israelites, but, as far as appears, not more inveterately so than other nations. They continued in a state of subjection till after the death of Ahab, when they refused to pay any more tribute, 2 Kings, iii, 4.

3. Tobah was a part of Syria, South of Damascus, and extending to the Euphrates, whither David was determined to carry his empire, that being the destined boundary of his country, Gen. xv, 8; and I have little doubt that, tho' it be now in a great measure desert, it will be rendered fertile, and be fully peopled, after the restoration of the Jews.

4. From the parallel passage in 1 Chron. xviii, 4, many circumstances imperfectly related in this place may be explained. There only the word *chariots* is inserted, and instead of seven hundred, is seven thousand horsemen. David reserved some horses for his own use. For tho' the kings of Israel were not to *multiply horses*, the keeping of them was not absolutely forbidden.

5. Syria was of very large extent, and in those times was divided into several principalities, and Damascus was to the North of Zobah. In consequence of this conquest David seems to have had the command of all the country that was destined for the Israelites, except Tyre and Sidon, and Solomon succeeding him probably built Tadmer, or Palmyra, as within his own territories. Whatever he built there was, no doubt, destroyed, and after the conquests of Alexander, it became in all respects a Grecian city.

9. This was another part of Syria, subject to another prince.

13. *Erected a trophy or some token of victory P. — the Edomites. LXX.*

Returning from the conquest of Syria, he defeated the Edomites, 1 Ch. xviii. 12 ; and from the title of the sixtieth psalm it appears that they were Edomites, and not Syrians, that were defeated there. The Hebrew words for Syria and Edom differ only in a single letter, and such as are easily mistaken for each other. The valley of salt was probably near to the dead sea.

16 This is a brief enumeration of the chief officers of David. Zadok was of the family of Eleazar, and Ahimelech of that of Ithamar. But Abiathar was high priest till the reign of Solomon, when he was set aside as had been foretold by Samuel. He that is called *Recorder* was probably the person who received and presented petitions, and the *Scribe* was he that wrote down all the public acts.

18. The Cherethites and Pelethites were probably the body guards of David. The former were of Philistine extraction, see 1 Sam. xxx. 14. and Zeph. ii. 5. But the Pelethites were probably Hebrews, there being two persons of that name mentioned in the scriptures, Num. xvi. 1. 1 Ch. ii. 33. The Chaldee interpreters call them archers and slingers, and perhaps they made use of those arms. From the number of golden shields which Solomon made, their number was probably 500 1 Kings x. 16 2 Ch. xii. 9—11. The word *Cohen*, which is used in this place for chief officers, could not signify

from *priests*, tho' that is the general meaning of the word. For they were the sons of David.

There are very few instances in all history of one man raising his country from so low a state as that in which David found his, to such power and splendour in so short a time. They who suppose there was nothing miraculous in his success must allow him to have been a very extraordinary man, notwithstanding all the defects of his character.

Ch. IX. 1. It might have been expected that David would have made this inquiry after the children of his friend, and have done something in consequence of it, before this time, whereas he appears to have known nothing of the family of Jonathan.

4. This was a mountain in Gilead on the other side of Jordan.

7. It is pretty evident that Mephibosheth had been apprehensive of David's considering him as a rival, and perhaps had left his own tribe to reside at a distance on this account. David however, does not appear to have done any thing voluntarily to injure any of the descendants of Saul; which, considering the jealousy and cruelty of Eastern princes in general, especially of new families, is considerable praise.

12. This Micah had many sons, and his posterity continued a long time, 1 Ch. viii, 34—ix, 40.

Ch. X. 1. This king was Nahash, to whom Saul had given a great defeat at Jabesh Gilead, 1 Sam. i, &c.

2. Nahash, having suffered from Saul, might have been disposed to take the part of David; but what services he rendered him does not appear.

3. This suspicion was not unnatural, after the conquest that David had made of Moab, and other neighbouring countries.

4. Greater indignity could not have been shewn to any persons than by cutting off their beards, and the skirts of the long garments, always worn in the East, and which, as they have no breeches, or drawers, cover their nakedness.

6. After this ignominious treatment of the ambassadors of David, he could not expect any thing but war. Beth Rehob was a city belonging to the Canaanites. The Syrians of Zobah had been defeated before, Ch. viii, 13. Maacah was a city of Palestine, beyond Jordan, in the tribe of Manasseh; and Rehob was in the tribe of Asher, but the Canaanites kept possession of them both, Josh. xiii, 11—13—xix, 26—Jud. 1, 31. The country of Tob was that to which Jephtha fled when he was persecuted by his brethren, Jud. xi, 3.

12. Tho' Joab was far from being a good man, he was not destitute of a sense of religion, and adhered to the worship of the true God.

16. Hadadezer had been defeated before, unless the preceding account of the conquest of his country has been misplaced.

18. In 1 Ch. xix, 18, it is seven thousand men, and instead of forty thousand horsemen, they are said to have been footmen.

Ch. XI. 2. The place in which Bathsheba bathed was probably in the open court of her house, in which it was usual to have cisterns of water. But as it might be

be seen from the king's house, it must have been very improper for that purpose without some covering.

3. From this it is evident that persons descended from the seven devoted nations were not only tolerated, but advanced according to their merit, on their embracing the national religion.

11. It seems from this that the ark was usually carried into the field of battle, notwithstanding its having been taken by the Philistines; and after what happened in consequence of that capture, they might think they had no reason to be under any apprehension of the same thing a second time.

15. We see in this shocking history how one vice leads to another. David, having committed adultery, found it necessary to add murder to it, and that of one of the bravest officers in his army.

21. *Jerobbaal*. LXX The Jews seem to have changed *Baal*, the name of an idol, for *bosheth*, which signifies *shame*, on several occasions.

26. This was probably a short mourning, the better to conceal his preceding commerce with her.

27. Shocked as every virtuous reader must be with this part of David's history, it bears sufficient marks of genuineness. For certainly no Israelite would have invented such a story as this, respecting a prince who was the greatest boast of their nation; and the truth of this story is a voucher for that of the rest of his history.

Ch. XII. 7. This story was excellently adapted to give David a just sense of the enormity of his conduct. We see daily in how different a light we view the very same thing as done by ourselves and others; self love
blinding

blinding the eyes and totally perverting the judgment: And yet this story gives but a partial view of David's conduct, being confined to the injustice of it, without giving any idea of the greater guilt of murder.

8. The wives, or at least the concubines, of all the Eastern princes become the property of the successor, tho' they are not used as wives.

9. Here the murder of Uriah, the most heinous circumstance in the conduct of David, is particularly insisted upon.

10. This alludes to the death of his son Amnon, and the rebellion and death of Absalom.

11. This was actually done by Absalom.

16. David must have been a man of very strong passions, and tender affections; but his regard for this infant, when he had so many children, is somewhat uncommon.

23. As David had strong passions, he shewed on this and other occasions, that he had great command over them. And notwithstanding all his faults, he discovered a strong sense of piety, habitually acknowledging God in all his ways.

27. *The royal city.* A. V. MSS.

It was situated on the river Sirka. *Dr. Geddes.*

30. This must be a talent in value. A talent in weight would have been insupportable, being, as is supposed, 125lb.

31. These were horrible modes of execution. But places taken by storm were always treated with great severity. What is meant by *passing through the brick kilns* is uncertain. But the meaning may be that he employed

employed them in sawing timber, and the other servile work here mentioned.

Ch. XIII. 2. Women of condition in the East are always kept from the sight of men, except their husbands or brothers, who could not legally marry them. This was the case with Amnon and Tamar, who had the same father, tho' not the same mother. He had, therefore, frequent opportunities of seeing her.

6. Perhaps she was known to make some particular kinds of cakes remarkably well. For king's wives and daughters were not above menial offices.

12. Little account was made of fornication with the heathens, but it was strictly forbidden to the Israelites.

13. This she might say to divert him from his purpose; but she could hardly be ignorant of that part of the law of her country which forbade such marriages.

15. His passion being satisfied, satiety, remorse, and aversion would naturally follow; but that he should treat her with this peculiar harshness is not easily accounted for, as it would tend to expose them both.

16. She was now publicly exposed, which was a great addition to the injury.

18. Such was the garment that Jacob provided for Joseph. The art of dying was little understood in early times, and therefore coloured garments were dear, and much valued.

21. Tho' David was much displeased, it does not appear that he inflicted any punishment on Amnon, and yet by the law of the country he ought to have suffered death.

26. It

26. It seems extraordinary that when David's sons were of full age, they should not be able to visit one another without the leave of their father.

37. Being guilty of a wilful murder, his punishment ought to have been death by the laws of Moses. But as Amnon escaped punishment, so might he.

38. Geshur was in Syria, as appears from Ch. xv, 8.

39. Tho' Absalom was guilty of murder, much might be said in his excuse; so that it was not extraordinary that the father's resentment should in time subside. Amnon being dead, he would at length cease to think about him.

Ch. XIV. 2. Tekoa was in the tribe of Judah, 2 Ch. xi, 5—6, but not near to Jerusalem.

9. She requested a speedy decision of her cause, praying that if she had given him any wrong information, the guilt might fall on her and her family.

11. This seems to have been an arbitrary proceeding of the king, in stopping the course of justice. But perhaps it was understood that this might sometimes be done at the discretion of the supreme magistrate; as modern princes have the power of pardoning crimes.

13. In applying the story to the case of the king, she artfully represents the people as the sufferers, by the loss of so many princes of his house; and in his decision of the case she had put, he condemned his own conduct.

14. The king's family was mortal as well as other persons, and therefore none of them should be put to death without necessity.

15. The people in general seem to have been dissatisfied

tified with the rigour of David, in suffering Absalom to remain so long in a state of exile.

19. He supposed Joab to be the friend of Absalom.

21 *Thou hast done this thing.* MSS.

He was evidently pleased with the contrivance of Joab, as it afforded him an excuse for doing what he wished to do.

26. A pleasing person is a greater recommendation to public favour than it ought to be; but we still see its influence, especially in persons of the higher classes of life. Much hair must have been considered as a great ornament. The weight of Absalom's was three pounds two ounces; but the pomatum and gold dust, which were often used in ornamenting the hair, might make part of this weight. This is supposed by some to have been not the weight, but the value of it. *Un. Hist.*

Ch. XV. 1. This state that Absalom took upon him would not be thought extraordinary; as by his age he was next heir to the crown. For tho' Chileab was born before him, yet as nothing is said of him, he was probably dead before this time.

6. Not content with endeavouring to ingratiate himself with the people by kind offices, he did every thing in his power to prejudice them against his father, as if he was inattentive to the duties of his station.

7. In some of the antient versions, and in Josephus, this is *four years*, which is much more probable than forty; meaning four years after Absalom's reconciliation with his father. Or rather this must have been from the time of David being anointed by Samuel. For this rebellion happened four years after it.

8. *Geshur in Edom.* See 1 Sam. xivii. 8. & K.

9. By this it appears that the worship of God at other altars than that at the tabernacle was common, and not thought to be contrary to the law. Hebron was in an elevated situation. It was the birth place of Absalom, where David had reigned seven years, and where he had, no doubt, frequently sacrificed.

14. It seems rather extraordinary that Absalom should have made all this progress in his conspiracy before his father was apprized of it. David was evidently unprepared to make any resistance. He could only fly, and that in great haste.

19. These Gittites were probably Philistines from Gath, who with their leader Ittai had joined David, in addition to the Cherethites, who were of the same country, and served as guards to David.

22. They went over the brook Cedron.

24. Here is another instance of carrying the ark, which makes it more probable that the same was done on other occasions.

25. The high priest had probably taken the ark with him in order to accompany David, as a thing of course; but he thought the measure unnecessary, and it might have retarded his flight.

27. Zadok was not the high priest, but probably the next in rank; and perhaps in the prime of life, and therefore a more active man than Abiathar.

30. To cover the head, and to go barefoot, were marks of great humility.

32. Archi was a city in the tribe of Ephraim, perhaps the native place of this Hushai, who was probably one

one of the standing council of David, and noted for his wisdom.

Ch. XVI. 1. This bottle was, no doubt, a goat or a sheep's skin full of wine, which was a considerable quantity.

3. This was a calumny, but not ill contrived. An ambitious descendant of Saul might naturally enough expect to avail himself of this division in the house of David.

5 This was in the tribe of Benjamin (Ch. xix, 16) Shimei being of the house of Saul shews that the accession of David had given umbrage to the family of his predecessor.

8. This insolence of Shimei, who must have been very near to David to be distinctly heard by him, is very extraordinary. Small as was the force that David had with him at this time, it must have been in his power to punish him on the spot; unless like Jotham, he was much higher on the mountain, and depended on his superior swiftness in case of a pursuit.

10. In the height of his distress David thought proper to repress the too forward zeal of his friends; and he discovered on this occasion admirable piety and command of temper. Shimei was not the less deserving of punishment for being the instrument in the hand of God to humble David. But overlooking the immediate and secondary cause, he regarded only the primary cause of his suffering, as Joseph did with respect to the base conduct of his brethren.

12. David, conscious that he deserved punishment, hoped that the heavier it fell, the sooner he should find

relief ; since he was confident that God, in whose hands he was, would punish him in measure, and not beyond his deservit.

13. Chardin says that in the East they who accuse a criminal throw dust upon him, as if he deserved to be put under ground. It is a common imprecation with the Turks and Persians, to say " Be covered with earth."

17 Hushai must have been known to have had the confidence of David, and therefore Absalom expressed his surprize at his leaving him.

19. He pretended to consider the voice of the people as the voice of God.

21. Having offended past forgiveness, the people would not be afraid to join him ; otherwise they might have apprehended that Absalom could easily make his peace with his father, and sacrifice his followers. There was certainly good policy in this, answering to the character he had acquired.

Ch. XVII. 5. If we consider the circumstances in which David fled from Jerusalem, when he was taken by surprize, his followers few, and exceedingly despirited, it must appear very probable that, without a miracle, he could hardly have escaped such a force as Ahitophel proposed to send after him.

10 Being an experienced general, he would take care to sleep where he would not be easily found, and if his person could not have been secured, the scheme of Ahitophel would be defeated. As no more than twelve thousand men were to be sent on this expedition, they might be defeated, and the report of this at the begin-

ning

ning of the war would give a decisive advantage to David.

14. This advice of Hushai would appear more safe than that of Ahitophel, tho' in consequence of it the war would be drawn out to a greater length. Tho' the hand of God was in every thing, there was no occasion for a particular interference to make Absalom and his followers prefer this measure.

17. This was near to Jerusalem, John xv, 7

20. This violation of truth, was, no doubt, well intended, but cannot be approved.

23. Besides being mortified in having his advice rejected, and that of Hushai preferred; he might think that the war, if it was drawn out to a great length, would finally terminate in favour of David.

24. This was in the tribe of Gad. This collecting an army from all the tribes must have taken much time, which would be in several respects of more advantage to David.

25. It appears from 1 Chron. ii, 17, that tho' he was an Israelite by religion, he was an Ishmaelite by birth. In some copies of the LXX it is *Ishmaelite* in this place, and that was probably the true reading. As Zeruiah was the sister of David, Amasa must have been the son of another of his sisters.

27. It is not said that this Shobi was king of the Ammonites, but he might be a wealthy person in the interest of David, tho' his country had been conquered by him. This Machir had taken care of Mephibosheth till David sent for him, Ch. ix, 5. As David was taken by surprise, he had not had time to provide for the

sustenance of his followers ; so that this supply would be peculiarly seasonable.

Ch. XVIII. 1. David must have collected a considerable army to be able to divide it into three parts, tho' the number is not mentioned ; and this must have required much time, tho' this circumstance also is not noticed.

6 The Ephraimites had no possession on that side of Jordan, and therefore this wood, or forest, may have had its name from the slaughter of the Ephraimites in it, in the time of Jephtha, Jud. xii.

7. This slaughter of twenty thousand men was probably in both the armies ; and as the wood impeded the flight of the vanquished, it is said to have devoured them.

9. It seems extraordinary that a vigorous young man should not have been able to disengage himself from the bough of a tree. But riding very swiftly he might be so caught by the neck, perhaps while he was looking behind him, as to be almost strangled in the first instance ; and then it might require more than all his strength both to support himself in that situation, and to open the boughs by which he was held. His hair too, tho' he did not hang by it, might contribute to entangle him.

13. He probably knew Joab's character, and suspected that tho' he would have been pleased with the thing being done, he might have got the author of it punished, in order to pay his court to David.

18. Josephus says that this was a pillar of marble

two furlongs from Jerusalem, in a place where the king's horses were exercised in running.

19. Serving in the army, as priests might do, he was under the command of Joab, who either might not wish him to be the bearer of unwelcome news, or think that he would tell the story to his disadvantage. But as he calls him *his son*, v. 22, he seems to have had an affection for him, and therefore the former supposition is the more probable.

27. He was probably well known to be a swift runner.

29 He no doubt, knew of the death of Absalom, but did not chuse to tell David of it.

32. This manner of intimating his death was such as was calculated to give David the least pain.

33. David must have been a man of strong and generous feelings, to lament as he did the death of a rebellious son, who certainly would not have spared him. As David had great faults, he had also great virtues; and there is no history so concisely written that has more genuine strokes of nature in it. It is a history that no person would, or could, have invented.

Ch. XIX. 3. Tho' he had gained the victory, it was a cause of more grief than joy to David.

7 This was taking great liberty with his king, but there is much reason in what he said.

13. Amasa was his nephew as well as Joab; and being displeased with Joab on several accounts, David wished to humble him; but his intention being known, it cost Amasa dear.

17. These one thousand men, of whom he was perhaps the captain, might attend him to shew his importance in the country, or to intercede for him.

20 There was little merit in the repentance of Shimei, to compensate for his shocking insolence when David was in adversity.

23. There was certainly great generosity in the disposition of David. Few persons would have been capable of behaving in this manner to such a person as this,

24. From this it would be evident that he had been in mourning ever since David left Jerusalem, and that it was not an appearance of sorrow assumed at the time.

29. Ziba was certainly deserving of punishment instead of a reward ; and therefore some suppose that by dividing the estate David meant that the property should be in Mephibosheth, and the administration of it only in Ziba. But as Ziba had been really useful to David in his adversity, and he had made him a promise, he might think he ought not wholly to retract it.

37. There is much good sense in this speech of Bargillai. Chimham was probably his son, who, being young, might be gratified with the favours David would confer upon him, and be a proper subject for them.

43. Having equally deserted their king, there was little cause of contention about their return to him.

XX. This Sheba is conjectured to have been some relation of Saul, and perhaps he had a command in the army of Absalom under Amasa.

2. The offence they took, tho' it seems a frivolous one, was that the men of Judah sent for the king without

out, waiting for their concurrence ; as if they were not as well affected to David as themselves.]

3. The king's wives or concubines were never taken by any other person;

4. He might wish to employ Amasa in preference to Joab, to convince the people, that he bore them no resentment on account of the late rebellion.

6. He chose to employ Abishai rather than Joab, perhaps as less obnoxious to the people.

8. He contrived that the sword should drop out of the scabbard, as if by accident, so that his taking it up would excite no suspicion,

9. D' Arvieux, in his account of an assembly of Arabs who were friends, says that all the emirs kissed each others beards and hands on giving or receiving their civilities, according to the rank and dignity of each.

11. Joab must have thought that, in the low state of David's circumstances, he would not dare to punish him ; and the people, knowing that he had been commander in chief before, might think that what he did was by the order of David.

14. This place was in the tribe of Naphtali, in the northern part of the country. The Beerites were probably the inhabitants of Beroth, in the tribe of Benjamin, of which Sheba was.

18. There is much uncertainty in the rendering of this verse. The Chaldee paraphrase has " It is said in the law that enquiry should be made," i. e. before the commencement of hostility. " They should, therefore, have made their proposals at Abel," which is the

name of a city, "whether they were faithful," i. e. true to their allegiance to David or not. She certainly meant to intimate that he had not proceeded in proper form, or with sufficient deliberation in besieging them. It was no uncommon thing for women of age and experience to take a part, and even the lead, in public affairs, in several ancient nations.

20. Why Sheba is called a man of Ephraim does not appear, when he was before said to be of the tribe of Benjamin. He might perhaps reside in Ephraim, or having distinguished himself in the revolt of the northern tribes, of which Ephraim was the chief, he might on that account have been so called.

22. Sheba was not a native of that place, and they evidently had no great attachment to him; so as to risk their own destruction in his defence.

23. This is a general account of the principal officers under David in the latter part of his life; and we find Joab, notwithstanding two atrocious murders at the head of his armies, but evidently much against his will. Beniah, here the captain of David's guard, was under Solomon the commander in chief of his army. That he was a valiant man appears from Ch. xxiii, 20.

25. It is probable that after Saul had killed the priests at Nob, he appointed Zadok to be highpriest, and David might not think proper to divest him of his office, so that both he and Abiathar were highpriests; but in what manner they officiated does not appear. Both of them are mentioned together on several occasions, till the beginning of the reign of Solomon, when the competitor

petitioner of Zadok having taken the part of Adonijah, was divested of his dignity.

26. Ira was probably a native of Jair in Gilead. We see in this place that the word *Cohen*, which is generally rendered *priest*, does not always denote this, but sometimes a person invested with a civil office. We see the same use of the word in Job xii, 19. *He leadeth princes away spoiled.*

Ch. XXI. 1. This was probably done when Saul destroyed all the priests at Nob; when the Gibeonites, serving as slaves at the tabernacle, might share their fate. And as the nation did not interfere to prevent it, and perhaps rejoiced at it, the punishment falls upon them, tho' at this distance of time. Tho' we may not see the equity of this judgment, it is agreeable to humbler events in the course of common providence, in which the innocent suffer with the guilty; and this suits best with a state of general discipline, subservient to a future state of retribution.

6. It does not appear that they had ever complained of their treatment; but being now called upon, they demand blood for blood.

8. *Merab the daughter of Saul.* MSS. K.

These were really the sons of Merab, which she bore to Adriel, 1 Sam. xviii, 19—xxv, 44; and therefore this is probably a mistake of the name.

10. They did not suffer as malefactors, who were to be buried on the day that they died, but were exposed, as it were to appease the divine anger. And that this was effected appears by God's sending the rain that had been long wanted.

11. The behaviour of the mother was not disapproved by David, or by the Gibeonites. And David took that opportunity of burying the remains of the family, at the same time, in the family sepulchre.

15. David was then in the decline of life, and less able than formerly to bear the fatigues of war.

16. It was probably the reward of some exploit that he carried about with him, the word *sword* not being in the original.

18. This is thought to have been the same place with Gezer, 1 Ch. xx, 4. Some MSS. have, *in Nob*.

19. In 1 Ch. xx, 5, he is called *the son of Dodo*. One of them may have been his grandfather. I was acquainted with a person who had six toes on each foot. He was a large sized man, but not uncommonly so.

Dr. Kennicott has discovered three corruptions in this text by comparing it with 1 Chron. xx, 5. We ought to read *Ethan, the son of Jair, a Bethlemite, slew the brother of Goliath the Gittite. &c.*

Ch. XXII 1. This song is, with some variation, inserted in the book of Psalms, viz. the eighteenth. David having a pious turn of mind, and habitually referring every thing to God, probably first composed this hymn after one of his first deliverances from the persecution of Saul, and having afterwards corrected and enlarged it on subsequent deliverances, towards the close of his life he gave it to the *chief musician*, as it is expressed in the title of the psalm, for more public use. It is in vain that we look for any thing parallel to this in the hymns or odes of the heathens, of which there are many.

my remaining. It is, indeed, a striking proof of the great superiority of the religion of the Hebrews to that of any other nation.

7. He recollected his various distresses, and his resignation and hope in God under them; and his hope was not disappointed.

8. There is something uncommonly sublime in this description of the Divine Being, coming as from heaven to avenge him of his enemies. Let this be compared with the idea that Homer gives of his Jupiter.

17. Having thus descended to the terror and dispersion of his enemies, he takes David into his immediate protection.

21. Here he properly mentions his integrity and piety, which recommended him to the divine protection. He was no favourite on any other account.

34. By the help of God he was able to march with swiftness through the plain, and to climb the highest eminences, in the pursuit of his enemies.

44. This alludes to the termination of the civil wars between him and the house of Saul.

Ch. XXIII. 1. By *last words* in this place we may understand the last poetical composition of David. It is equally pious with the preceding hymn, and a solemn record of the goodness of God to him.

3. This has the appearance of a declaration of God made to himself, and not by the intervention of any prophet.

4. The beautiful appearance of the morning dew upon the grass is transient, but not so the glory of the house of David.

5. His house was not to fail, tho' he had not his wish in other respects.

8. Dr. Kennicott has discovered many errors in this account of David's worthies by comparing it with a similar one in 1 Ch. xii. 11. &c. It is conjectured by Dr. Kennicott that the original of part of this verse was, "David had Jashobeam an Hachmonite, chief among the captains." See 1 Chron. xi. 11. The words *Adino the Ezrite* are a corruption, for words which should be rendered *he raised up his spear against eight hundred* &c. In the corresponding passage in 1 Chron. xi, 11, it is three hundred.

9. This verse is restored by reading, *He was with David at Pasdammōi. And when the Philistines were gathered together to battle, and the men of Israel were gone away,* i. e. fled, "he arose &c.

11. In the book of Chronicles it is *barley*.

13. *Now these three who were head men, superior to the thirty, went down and came over the rock to David.* This cave was one in which David had taken refuge.

14. The advanced guard of the Philistines.

16. This is one of the many instances of David's great generosity. We here see that the phrase *before the Lord* does not always refer to the sanctuary. He poured out this water, together with an address to God, whom he considered as present in all places.

21. This verse restored should be as follows, *And he slew an Egyptian, a man whose stature was five cubits high; and in the hand of the Egyptian was a spear like weaver's beam, &c.*

24 *Asahel*

24. *Asahel, the brother of Joab, was also above the following thirty.*

32. *Gauni, of the sons of Hasham. Jonathan the son of Shamha the Horonite. CONJ. K.*

35. *Naari, the son of Arbai. CONJ. K.*

36. *Joel, the son of Nathan. CONJ. K.*

39. Thirty six only are recited, and therefore it is supposed that the name of Joab made up the original number. It is probable that David kept an account of all the heroic actions of his followers, arranged according to their merit; and this being known, would be a powerful motive to great exploits.

Ch. XXIV. 1. The cause of the judgments of which an account is given in this chapter, is said to have been the anger of God against Israel. But in v. 10 David takes the blame upon himself, without being contradicted by the prophet. No doubt it appeared proper, in the divine administration, that the people should suffer; and the immediate instrument of most of the sufferings of nations, is the misconduct of their rulers; which misconduct, like the obstinacy of Pharaoh, is ascribed to God, as the author of nature, and the governor of the world. In the corresponding account in 1 Ch. 21, it is said that *Satan* stirred up David to number the people. But the meaning of this is no more than that an improper thought arose in his mind; *Satan*, which there occurs for the first time in this history, signifying the principle, or cause of evil, whatever that be, personified.

3 Tho' Joab remonstrated against the proposal of
David

David, as proceeding from vanity, and perhaps as giving himself some unnecessary trouble, he did not observe that when the people were numbered, they ought, according to the laws of Moses (Exod. xxx, 12) to give half a shekel each person. To this David probably thought the people would object.

5 We no where read of such a river; but it was probably a small brook that emptied *itself* into the sea of Gallilee. Gezer was a town in that tribe.

7. It appears from 1 Chron. xxi, 6, that the Levites and the tribe of Benjamin were not numbered.

9. In the book of Chronicles the men of Israel are said to have been three hundred thousand more, and those of Judah thirty thousand less, than they are here said to be. But it is thought by some that in this account the standing army was not numbered. For the Jews observe that there were twenty four thousand men that served every month, and this number for each of the tribes, would, with their officers, make up about this number. Or the one may be a general, and the other a more particular account of the numbers. From either of the accounts, there appears to have been a great superiority in the tribe of Judah, over any of the others. Allowing the men capable of bearing arms to have been one fourth of all the inhabitants, they will have been five millions two hundred thousand in all, which is a great population for so small a country. David, no doubt, was sensible that there had been a great increase of the people in his reign, after he had delivered them from all their enemies, notwithstanding the loss of men in his various wars;

wars ; and this is a reasonable subject of pride in a prince.

10. There does not appear to be any cause for this strong consciousness of guilt, besides the omission of the tax which the law required ; and the pride and ostentation which suggested the measure.

13. That there was a real miracle in this judgment, is evident from its being made to depend upon David's choice of the mode of suffering.

14. The hand of God would be more apparent in the pestilence, because the proximate cause of it is less evident ; but it is not less really so in the calamity of war.

17. To give David a more lively idea of the hand of God in this plague, he was permitted to see the appearance of an angel, perhaps with some instrument of death in his hand, tho' such a Being might have nothing to do in producing the disorder.

18. Threshing floors in the East are level places in the open air. This was on mount Moriah, where Abraham was about to offer up Isaac, and where the temple of Solomon was afterwards built. See 2 Chron. 1. iii.

23 The word *king* following Araunah is wanting in several of the antient versions, and in four MSS.

24. In the book of Chronicles it is *six hundred shekels of gold by weight*. Perhaps these fifty shekels might be the price of the building and of the oxen, and the larger sum for that of the ground about it. These differences, however, furnish a proof that the books are no forgeries

forgeries, at least by the same set of men. For then they would, no doubt, have guarded against any charge of inconsistency.

25. Here we have another instance of sacrificing in a place where there was neither the tabernacle nor the ark.

NOTES ON THE FIRST BOOK OF

K I N G S.

THE two books that bear the title of the first and second, or of the third and fourth of Kings, according as the two preceeding books are called by the name of Samuel, or not, contains the history of the Hebrew nation from the accession of Solomon to the Babylonish captivity, a period of about six hundred years. They were probably compiled by Ezra, from authentic records written near the time of the transactions, several of them being expressly referred to in these books and those of Chronicles; as the *acts of Solomon* Ch. xi, 41, the *books of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah and Israel*, very frequently the *book of Jasher*, which contained the acts of Jehoshaphat, 2 Ch. xx, 34, Isaiah also wrote the acts of Uzziah, 2 Ch. xxvi, 24, and some of the particulars of the reign of Ahaz and Hezekiah are found in the book that bears his name.

Ch. I.

Ch. I. 1. He was now seventy years old, at which age, however, such extreme debility, and want of natural warmth, is not common.

2. No warmth is so equal as that of the animal body; and this is precisely the degree that was wanted in the case of David. She was, no doubt, married to him; and as it was well known that, as the widow of a king, she could not afterwards marry any other person, it was in fact devoting herself to a state of perpetual virginity,

3. He followed the example of Absalom, 2 Sam. xv, 1; but he does not seem to have taken the same method to ingratiate himself with the people.

6. Of David's excessive fondness for his children we have had several instances; and tho' he had suffered by it in the case of Absalom, he does not appear to have gained more wisdom, or fortitude; in consequence of it.

7. Joab was, no doubt, offended at the displeasure David had frequently expressed concerning him; and Abiathar probably perceived that Zadok was in more favour than himself.

8. The three first of these being well known to be the favourites of David, they had no hopes of gaining them to concur in a measure in which he was not consulted. Of the two others nothing is known, tho' this Shimei may be the same that Solomon raised to a considerable office, Ch. iv. 8. These *mighty men* were probably those that were enumerated 2 Sam. xxiii.

9. Josephus says the king's garden were near to this fountain.

10. He probably knew that Solomon was destined by his father, and that by divine appointment, to suc-

ceed him. If this was the case, it was extraordinary that he should venture on the measure, and more so that all the king's sons should join him, tho' they might attend this feast without knowing the purpose of it.

13. That Solomon was declared by God to be David's successor, and also to build the temple, appears from 1 Ch. xxii, 8, &c.

20. It was in all times usual for kings in the East to name their successors; and when this was not done, the people, or the officers of state, chose which of the family they thought most fit to reign, with little respect for the claim of primogeniture, tho' it was often the occasion of civil wars.

28. David does not appear to have been at all alarmed at the proceedings of Adonijah, but immediately directed the measures proper to be taken to defeat them.

35. This was a fountain to the West of the city, and thither they probably went because it might have been a place of much resort; and in order to make the ceremony of the coronation more conspicuous, by a solemn procession through the city to the palace.

39. There was always a quantity of oil, as well as of every thing else that was used in the service of the sanctuary, in places adjoining to it; and on this account it might be called *holy*, being designed for sacred uses, tho' there had been no form of consecration made use of with respect to it; any more than with respect to the flour or salt, &c. &c.

48—*Has given my son, MSS. one of my seed, LXX.*

49. Seeing all the city joyfully acknowledge Solomon

mon, it was evident that it would be in vain for Adonijah to oppose it.

53. Solomon was now actually king before the death of his father ; and considering what Adonijah had done, and the extreme jealousy and cruelty of sovereign princes in the East, Solomon shewed great moderation in overlooking his offence. He might also be influenced by a regard to his father, whose affection for all his children was well known.

Ch. II. 3. As it is evident from this and the whole tenor of the preceding history, that the laws of Moses were well known to the nation, how absurd must it be to suppose that the Pentateuch was written in the reign of Josiah, when the copy of it was found in the temple. Whatever faults David had, he never wavered in his adherence to his religion, and he earnestly recommended the same to his son.

7. The eating at the king's table was at public and solemn feasts, where many persons had a right to a place.

9. David has been much censured for expressing these sentiments of revenge on his death bed. But his resentment was unquestionably just, and what, out of prudence, or from a regard to his oath, he could not do himself, he thought his son might do. Both Joab and Shimei had gone a long time unpunished. But as it is common for particles in a preceding clause of a sentence to be understood in the next, so that they do not require to be repeated, this passage may be rendered, "Hold him not guiltless, but do *not* bring down his grey hairs to the grave in blood." Accordingly this was

not the sentence that Solomon passed upon him, but only confinement. It was his violation of this that was the cause of his death.

17. It was certainly unlawful for any man to marry his father's wife; but he might consider the case of Abiathar as something different from that of a wife.

22. *He is my elder brother, and he has for him Abiathar the priest, and Joab the son of Zeruiah.* A. V. K.

He saw that to take the widow of David was, in effect, to claim the kingdom, and he suspected that the request was made with that view, and also that Joab and Abiathar had been consulted about it. That Abiathar was at the disposal of Solomon is evident from Adonijah applying to him for her. So God is said (2 Sam. xii, 8) to have given David all the wives of Saul, they being at the disposal of his successor.

27. This prediction is in 1 Sam. ii, 31, and thus the high priesthood passed from the family of Ithamar, of which was Eli, to that of Eleazar, from which Zadok was descended, and in this family it continued till the captivity.

31. The heathen temples were always privileged places, where the greatest criminals were safe. But there was no such superstition in the Hebrew institutions. To the altar, or a city of refuge, a criminal might fly till the case was inquired into; but if he was guilty of a wilful crime, they were no security for him. Ex. xxi, 14.

37. Considering the atrocious conduct of Shimei, this was a merciful sentence.

Ch. III. 1. This was not unlawful, provided the wife conform

conformed to the religion of the Hebrews, which, as Solomon appears to have done nothing as yet that was offensive to God, the daughter of Pharaoh no doubt did; and to this the heathens would not object; being of opinion that the gods of any particular country were to be worshiped in that country. He afterwards built a palace for her, Ch. ix, 22, 2 Chron. viii, 11, He probably enlarged the city, and made a wall of greater extent at least in some places than David had done. In the time of David the hill Moriah, on which the temple was built, was not within the city, for on it was the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

2. The want of a temple could not have been the true reason why the people had sacrificed in high places; for the tabernacle would have served for the purpose just as well. Till this time there is no mention of this mode of worship being disapproved. It was practised by Samuel, David, other pious Israelites, and many pious kings in after times, and therefore could hardly be contrary to the spirit and intention of the law, tho' it was afterwards abused to superstitious purposes.

3. We have seen several instances of David's sacrificing, if not in high places, yet in other places than at the national altar.

4. Here was probably the national altar, the tabernacle being removed thither, after having been some time at Nob, whither it had been carried from Shiloh. For this great number of sacrifices they probably erected more altars, or they must have made a longer stay at the place.

10. To have made this choice shews him to have

been, indeed, worthy of the kingdom. It is not probable that either Abfalom or Adonijah would have made it. They thought themselves fufficiently equal to the government of the kingdom.

12. This does not neceffarily imply any fupernatural illumination at or from this time, but that he was already poffeffed of the fubject of his petition, and that it would be continued to him.

13. The fplendour of Solomon's reign, as well as the fame of his wifdom, is celebrated in all the Eaft to this day ; as oriental hiftories and romances bear witnefs. Indeed it is probable that no country was ever more flourishing than Palestine was in his reign, or that more of what is ufually called *wealth* was ever brought into the fame compafs.

15. This was in another tabernacle, which David had built for the ark, and where it was not thought unlawful to offer facrifices.

27. There was certainly much fagacity in this decision ; but it did not require fupernatural illumination to make it.

Ch. IV. 2. He was the fon of Ahimaaz, the fon of Zadok, 1 Ch. vi, 8—9 but fuch are frequently called *sons*.

3. Thefe two and Azariah were the three fcribes.

4. Abiathar might be allowed the title of high prieft, as having borne that office, or as having been in it fome part of Solomon's reign.

5. That is over the twelve officers mentioned v. 7. Here the word *cohen* is ufed for a civil officer.

8. The proper names of feveral of thefe perfons are
by

by some accident lost, and those of their fathers only preserved. As it was the custom to mention both at the same time, there can hardly be a doubt but that it was done here.

22 It has been computed that this quantity of flour would make bread for thirty three thousand persons.

23. The word here rendered *roebuck* was probably the wild ox, the *bekker el wash* of the Arabs, about as large as our stag.

24. Tiphsh is the same as Tapsœus, where there was a passage over the Euphrates.

26. In 1 Chron. xxii, 9, it is said that he had four thousand horses; but it is supposed that there were four thousand stables, each containing ten horses. Ten thousand horsemen was no great number; and by the law he was only forbidden to *multiply* horses. But if he did not exceed in horses, he certainly did in wives and concubines.

31. Perhaps *sons of the choir*, i. e. musicians, Ho.

Who these persons were, and what proofs they had given of their superior knowledge, are now unknown. They were, no doubt, famous in their day. But what was generally called *wisdom* in the East, very often consisted in obscure sentences or riddles, like that of Samson, containing more ingenuity than useful knowledge.

32. Proverbs, or short sentences relating to the conduct of life, was a great part of the wisdom of antient times. Many of those of Solomon are preserved in the canonical book of Proverbs, and in the Apocryphal one of Ecclesiasticus. Of his songs, or poetical compositions, one only has been preserved, on his marriage, as is

supposed, with Pharaoh's daughter. It is rather extraordinary that only one of the psalms is ascribed to him:

33. These were treatises of natural history, a branch of real and useful knowledge ; but none of them have been preserved.

34. The fame of Solomon's wisdom was, no doubt, very great ; and his wealth and magnificence would make him still more conspicuous. We are not, however, to suppose that, literally speaking, *all* the kings of the earth went to Jerusalem to visit him. The queen of Sheba did so, and probably other neighbouring princes, with whom Solomon was at peace.

Ch. V. 5. Solomon appears to have no apprehension of not being believed, when he asserted that God had spoken to his father David ; and there was no principle in heathenism that would make it be thought at all improbable ; all persons believing in the intervention of their several deities, in the affairs of their worshippers ; and from several circumstances it is evident that the God of Israel was held in great veneration in the neighbouring nations, tho' they all thought themselves under obligation to worship as their fathers had done before them.

6 It is evident from the tenor of this message, that Solomon considered Lebanon as within his dominions. He only requested the aid of Hiram's people in cutting the timber, on account of their superior skill. The Sidonians were famed in the time of Homer for their skill in curious arts,

§ Some

8. Some think that the word rendered *fir* was a particular species of cedar.

11. The Israelites, applying chiefly to agriculture, had always great plenty of corn, with which they supplied the country about Tyre in the reign of Agrippa, Acts xii, 20. In 2 Chron. ii, 10, Solomon's first proposal is considerably different from this, and consists of more particulars. It is there said to be twenty thousand-corgs of pure oil. Here it is said to be twenty baths. But the LXX, and other antient versions have twenty thousand in this place.

16. In 2 Ch. ii, 18, they are said to have been three thousand six hundred. The copies of the LXX vary in this place.

18. The Gíblites were the inhabitants of Gabala near Lebanon, mentioned by Pliny. These people were not conquered in the time of Joshua, Ch. xiii, 5. but were within the country promised to the Israelites. It may seem extraordinary that so much preparation should be made for a building of no greater magnitude than the temple is said to have been; and tho' the workmanship was, no doubt, exquisite, the quantity of materials could not have been very great. But the buildings adjoining to the temple, and the courts of it, were very considerable, and Solomon had other buildings in view besides the temple; and perhaps other persons might avail themselves of this opportunity of laying in timber for their buildings of various kinds.

Ch. VI. 1. Jephtha says that they had dwelt in the land of Canaan three hundred years; Jud. xi, 25. If to these be added the forty years that were passed in the

wilderness, one hundred and forty will have intervened between the time of Jephtha and the building of the temple. Jephtha uses a more general and less definite number; but this has the appearance of greater exactness, and implies that the Israelites had more historical dates for the computation of time than are now extant. A good part of these four years, were, no doubt, employed in making the necessary preparations for this building.

2. These dimensions are twice as large as those of the tabernacle. Forty cubits was the length of the holy place, and twenty that of the most holy. According to the LXX, the height was twenty five cubits. In the tabernacle the height was the same with the width. Here if the numbers are right, it was much higher in proportion. But as the holy of holies was only twenty cubits high (as we see v. 20) and the height of both these places was the same in the tabernacle, I suspect it was originally the same here. In the temple described by Ezekiel there is no mention of any difference in the height of the holy and most holy places.

4 These openings, or windows, are supposed to have been wide within, and narrow without, by means of which more light would be admitted, and the rain excluded. For there was no glass in these windows.

6. These chambers surrounded the whole building, except the porch, which was to the East; and the walls being much thicker below than above, the lower apartments would be less than the upper ones. These chambers were for the use of the priests, and store places for the articles that were wanted in the service of the sanctuary.

ary. It appears from Josephus that there were twelve of these rooms on the South side of the temple, as many on the North, and six on the West ; and they consisted of three stories, each five cubits high. The temple had no connection with these buildings ; but it should seem that there was no great space between them, since it is only said that the beams of these buildings should not be supported by the walls of the temple, but have a support independent of it. The height of these buildings was five cubits less than that of the temple ; and perhaps the windows of the temple might be near the top, above the surrounding buildings, in order to admit more light.

7. All the stones must have been exactly squared and polished, and the places of each accurately ascertained, before they were brought to the place of erection. This would tend to impress the mind with great reverence for the building.

8. *The door of the lower chamber, LXX.*

The *right* side means the South, the spectator being supposed to look towards the East.

9. Some suppose that the roof was arched, but this is not the necessary construction of the words.

11. This was probably by the intervention of some prophet ; for it is not said that God spake to himself as before.

18. It was curiously carved.

20. The room was a perfect cube, and all covered with plates of gold, amounting, as appears from 2 Ch. xxxviii, to six hundred talents.

22. This was the altar of incense, and must have been different from that which had been in the tabernacle.

27 These

27. These cherubims were different from those that had been made for the ark, and attached to the cover of it, and which were of solid gold.

29. These ornaments covered all the walls both of the holy place and the most holy.

32. There were two folding doors in the place of the curtain, which separated the holy place in the tabernacle from the most holy.

36. This wall, which separated the priests from the people was only three cubits high. The cedar beams are supposed to have been used in facing it on the inside.

No mention is here made of the amazing foundation described by Josephus of that part of the temple which was opposite to the mount of Olives, which filled up part of the intermediate valley, and which consisted of stones of a most immense size, in order to enlarge the hill on which the temple stood. Nor is there any account of the outer wall, inclosing the place where the people attended, while the priests were officiating at the altar.

Ch VII. 1. He did not begin this structure till he had finished the temple. For it appears from Ch ix, 10, that he was twenty years in building them both.

2. This house was near to Jerusalem, as appears from Ch. xiv. 25, and from several circumstances; but it might have this name from its having been built of the cedar that was brought from Lebanon.

3. There were, therefore, but three rows of pillars in the second story, and consequently sixty pillars below.

4 Perhaps

4. Perhaps one under another in three rows, or on three sides of the house; there being more on the west side, where was the porch.

12. It is but an imperfect idea that we can form of these buildings from this account of them. Strength and durability seem to have been consulted as much as magnificence; as appears especially from the immense size of the stones employed in their construction.

14. His mother was of the tribe of Dan, 2 Ch. ii, 14, and her second husband was a Tyrian, who is called the father of Hiram because he had the care of him. He excelled in other arts besides that of working in brass, as appears from the corresponding account of him in the book of Chronicles.

15. In 2 Ch. ii, 15, he is said to have made two pillars of thirty-five cubits; but that must have been the length of the two, and one cubit may be allowed for the pedestal of each.

16. In 2 Kings xxv, 17, they are said to have been but *three cubits*. But this account probably included the wreath or work of pomegranates that was upon the chapters.

22. There is no certain interpretation of these particular ornaments. It does not appear that these two pillars supported any thing; so that they must have been merely for ornament, like obelisks, one on each side of the entrance.

25. The business of sacrificing required a great cald of water, both for the washing of the priests' hands, the utensils used in the service, and the places where the animals were killed. This vessel was called *a sea* from the
the

the great size of it, for it contained about five hundred of our barrils. In 2 Ch. iv, 5, it is said to have contained three thousand baths. Perhaps two thousand was as much as they usually put into it. It is evident from the making of these brazen oxen, that the Israelites were not forbidden to make the images of animals, except for the purpose of worshipping them.

39. Instead of the one laver in the tabernacle, there were in the temple, besides the great brazen sea, ten lavers of a lesser size, of particularly exquisite workmanship, moving on wheels, and ornamented with the figures of various animals, and also with those of cherubims, which, as has been observed, were emblematical figures; having when most complete the heads of a man, an ox, a lion, and an eagle. It is not easy to form an exact idea of these lavers from this description of them; but from this very particular account of their form, they must have been thought very wonderful.

45. This is a brief enumeration of all the work in brass that was made by Hiram.

48. Instead of one table of shew bread, which sufficed for the tabernacle, there appears from 2 Ch. iv, 7, to have been ten in the temple, tho' some think that only one was made use of.

49. There were also ten candlesticks, and the place being more ample, more light would be wanted than in the tabernacle. For tho' there were what are called *windows* in the temple, they were probably very narrow, and very high, so as to have been of more use to let out the smoke of the lamps, and of the incense, than to admit light.

We

We read of no heathen temple so expensively fitted up as this, or such provision for the decent and cleanly performance of all the offices of religion. Indeed, there was no other temple in the world in which there was so much to be done. We read of no morning or evening sacrifices, with additional ones for the sabbath, new moons, and other festivals, in any other, besides as many voluntary ones as the heathens had. No priests were so expensively habited as the Hebrew high priest. The chief expence of the heathen temples was the buildings themselves, which, however, were in general, very small, and in those of the later Grecian temples the images of their gods, of which that of the Hebrews was destitute. With what probability then can this be said to have been an imitation of any other? The heathens may, in some measure, have taken a pattern from the Israelites, for we read of no heathen temple of any expensive construction, prior to this of Solomon.

51. In this treasury it is most probable that the former tabernacle, the golden altar, and the table of shew bread which had been in it, were deposited. No place would be so inviolate as this, and the gold and silver that was not employed in this temple might be wanted for repairs, and other uses in future times.

Ch. VIII. 2. This was the month in which was celebrated the feast of tabernacles, the most joyful of any in the year.

4. The tabernacle erected by Moses was then at Gibeon, and another made by David was in Jerusalem, together with the ark. As the former only is called the *tabernacle of the congregation*, it was probably this that

was

was intended here ; and it was very properly brought into the treasury of the temple, to prevent superstition, and a schism in the national worship. Whatever there was of value in the tabernacle of David was, no doubt, repositied there too. As Solomon had provided a sufficient quantity of vessels of all kinds for the service of the temple, these would be lodged in the treasury, or they might be used whenever more than the usual number was wanted.

6. These two large cherubims must have been fixed in the floor, and the ark with its proper cherubims must have been placed between them.

8. From this it appears that this book, or those from which it was compiled was written before the Babylonish captivity.

9. The pot of manna, and the rod of Aaron, had not been put into the ark, but were kept in the most holy place *before the testimony*, as it is said Ex. xvi, 33, or near to the ark.

11. By this extraordinary appearance the Divine Being signified his presence in this temple, as he had done in the tabernacle ; and this was a miracle of which all the people were witnesses.

12. In 2 Chron. vii. 1—3 no mention is made of the glory of God filling the house till after the prayer of Solomon, when fire issued from it, and consumed the sacrifice on the altar, which is not mentioned here. From this it is evident that the two accounts, tho' not inconsistent, were originally different, and not one of them copied from the other. Many other variations prove the same thing.

14. He had been looking towards the temple, and now turned round to address the congregation.

22. He now turned again towards the temple, and addressed the Supreme Being in the following admirable prayer, being on a scaffold raised on purpose for this occasion; and when he began to pray he fell on his knees, as appears from v. 54, and from the corresponding account in the book of Chronicles.

27. From this it appears that Solomon, tho' he had built a temple for the peculiar residence of God with his people, had a just idea of his omnipresence.

29. This practice was observed by pious Jews when the temple was demolished, as by Daniel and others, that they might always bear in mind the relation that God bore to their country, and the people to whom he had given it, as also to express their earnest desire of a return to it, and their permanent settlement in it.

31. An oath before an altar was always deemed more solemn and binding than any other by all nations, as made in the more immediate presence of God, who was invoked to bear witness to the truth, and punish the perjured person.

35. He ascribes every calamity to the divine resentment on account of sin.

39. Here God's intimate knowledge of the hearts of men is particularly recognized.

42. Gentiles who worshipped the true God were not allowed to go into the temple to worship with the Israelites, but they stood without, and it is supposed that there was an inclosed place, or court, for their use,

tho' no mention is made of it in this account of the construction of the temple.

43. Here it appears that Solomon had a just idea of the relation that the Divine Being bore to all mankind, and of his favour to all virtuous and pious men, tho' the Israelites were his peculiar people.

48. This is in agreement with the repeated admonitions and exhortations of Moses, who had a clear foresight of the apostacy of his nation, of their dispersion into all countries, and their future restoration on their repentance.

54. Having delivered this prayer with his face towards the temple, he rose from his knees, and turned towards the people.

60. Here Solomon acknowledges but one God in all the earth.

63. This must have been in the course of fourteen days, seven of which were employed in the dedication of the temple, and seven in the feast of tabernacles.

64. That is, he made use of the whole court, as well as of the altar of burnt offering, for these numerous sacrifices; one altar not being sufficient for the purpose.

65. The *entrance of Hamath* was the Northern boundary of the land of Canaan, and the river of Egypt the Southern. This is by some thought to have been a small stream which emptied itself into the sea near the lake Sirbonis, between mount Casius and Rinocolura. By Joshua it was called *Sihor*, a name that is sometimes given to the Nile, but others are of opinion that the *river of Egypt*, always means the Nile, and no other.

As the tenth day of the seven month, which was the
annual

annual day of expiation, intervened between these fourteen days, it would necessarily make an interruption in this festival ; so that the two seven days were not contiguous.

Ch. IX. 2. This therefore, was in a dream as before, and probably immediately after the dedication of the temple.

9 Fairer warning could not have been given of the fatal consequences of apostacy, exactly agreeing with the solemn denunciations of Moses ; and they have been abundantly verified in the history of the Hebrew nation to this day. But no one fact of this kind is more extraordinary than the defection of Solomon himself, after building this temple, and having had two appearances of God to himself.

10. The former of these was seven years in building, and the latter thirteen. Ch. vi, 38, vii, 1:

11. These cities were either acquired by conquest, or were no proper part of the land of Canaan, which the king had no power to alienate ; or they might have been mortgaged till the debt he had contracted was paid.

12. It does not follow that these cities were not of sufficient value, but that they did not suit the purpose of Hiram ; perhaps on account of the land requiring such cultivation as his people were not accustomed to. Some think that the signification of the word *Cabul* is *not pleasing* ; but others think that it signifies *boundary*, being situated between the two countries.

14. This gold might have been sent before, and not after the present of the cities.

15. This levy, or tax, does not necessarily imply a

contribution *in money*. It might be *labours*, for the purpose of the great works which he carried on. Millo was a large and beautiful place near to mount Sion. David had built about mount Sion *from Millo inwards*, 2 Sam. v, 9, leaving Millo itself as it was. Some suppose that Solomon built a strong fortress in this place ; but others are of opinion that it was a bridge, or causeway, joining mount Sion to mount Moriah, on which the temple was built. There were three walls of Jerusalem. One of them is supposed to have inclosed the temple and the king's house, the middle one to have surrounded the houses of the prophets and persons of distinction (which is thought to explain 2 Kings, xxii, 14) and the third the whole city.

Hasor was a city of great note before the conquest of Canaan, and was given to the tribe of Naphthali. Megiddo was in the tribe of Manasseh (Josh. xvii, 11) and Gozan in that of Ephraim, Josh. xxi, 22.

16. Gezir in the tribe of Ephraim was so far out of the way of the kings of Egypt, that it could not have been the place that he had conquered. David left no place in the land of Canaan unsubdued, except Tyre and Sidon. This Gezir, therefore, must have been some place occupied by the Canaanites between Judah and Egypt.

17. Bethhoron was in the tribe of Benjamin, Josh. xviii, 13 ; but Bethhoron *the upper* was in that of Ephraim, Josh. xvi, 5.

18. A city of the name of Baalath was in the tribe of Dan, Josh. xix, 44. As Tadmor signifies a *palm tree*, it is supposed to have been the same with Palmyra, afterwards

terwards so famous as a Grecian city, and subject to Zenobia, who was conquered by the emperor Emilian. The only objection to this is, that it lies so far to the North, in Syria, as seemingly to be out of the bounds of the country promised to the Israelites. It was, however, in that part of the country which was conquered by Solomon, 2 Ch. viii, 3. This place is thought to have been intended for a medium of intercourse with India by land, while he kept up a commerce with the same country by sea.

19 Tho' Solomon did not neglect what related to his personal magnificence, the far greater part of his expences were for the honour of God, and the permanent advantage of his country.

21. This is another evidence of this part of the book having been written before the captivity:

22. His *servants* means his officers, persons occupying honourable stations in the kingdom.

23. In 2 Ch. viii. 10, they are said to be two hundred and fifty, but those here mentioned might be all that were about the temple, while the rest were employed in other works.

24. The reason given 2 Ch. viii, 11, why the daughter of Pharaoh did not continue in the ancient palace, where David had lived, is said to have been because it was a *kind of holy place*, perhaps on account of the ark having been kept in it. This gives some suspicion that she was not wholly free from idolatry.

25. This was, no doubt, at the three great festivals, on which occasions his sacrifices were particularly numerous. He might add to the quantity of incense burn-

ed in the holy place, tho' this is the only instance that we meet with of any person's devotion being expressed in this manner. But as it is added that *so he finished the house*, this might be done at the time of the consecration,

26. This was a place on the Red sea that had been conquered by David from the Edomites. It continued in the possession of the Israelites about one hundred and fifty years, till the Edomites recovered it in the time of Joram, 2 Kings, viii, 20. It was again taken from them by Uzziah, 2 Kings, xiv, 22, and lost again by Ahaz when the king of Syria took it, Ib. Ch. xvi, 6.

27. As the great wealth and power of Tyre was derived from commerce, and especially that with the East, it is probable that Hiram and Solomon divided the profits of this trade from Eziongeber. He would hardly have supplied Solomon with seamen, without which he could not have engaged in the undertaking, from mere friendship.

28. Ophir is generally thought to have been some place in the East Indies; and at no great distance from the city of Malacca there is a hill called *the golden mountain*. This country was supposed by Josephus to be the Ophir of Solomon. Mr. Le Poivre says that the inhabitants of Malacca and Sumatra called their gold mines *Ophirs*, and Dr. Marsden says that in the latter is a hill called *mount Ophir*, possibly from its having been rich in gold.

Mr. Bruce however, with much probability places Ophir in Africa, opposite to Madagascar, and the name of *Ophir* is so like that of *Aphrica*, that I think it an additional

additional reason in favour of his hypothesis. He likewise well explains the reason of the voyage taking up three years; and the commodities brought to these ships, as gold, &c. were such as were supplied by Africa. The mines may yet be traced. And neither these ships, nor those that went to Tarshish, are said to have brought any of the peculiar commodities of the Indies, viz. cotton goods, or pepper. 1 Kings, x, 22—1 Chron. ix, 2. In 2 Chron, viii, 18, it is said that they brought four hundred and fifty talents of gold. Perhaps when it was refined it was only four hundred and thirty. However the difference of the two accounts is very inconsiderable. This was probably the annual profit of this commerce. Such a source of gain would now be deemed unworthy of a sovereign prince. But the idea of the meanness of commerce, and that of the superior dignity of a warlike employment, arose in the feudal times in Europe. If a prince monopolize any branch of commerce, to the exclusion of his subjects, it is manifest oppression; but if the common trade be conducted on the principle of equality, whatever the prince gains in this way is a relief to his subjects, and, like the produce of crown lands, takes from the necessity of laying taxes.

Ch. X. 1. Mr. Bruce, with great probability, places the queen of Sheba in Africa, on the coast of Adcl, and supposes her empire to have extended over Abyssinia. The seat of her empire being opposite to Arabia, some part of that country might be within her dominions, and hence might come the *spices* that she brought to Solomon.

Near to Azab Mr. Bruce says are large ruins, and especially of an aqueduct, consisting of large blocks of marble, joined with bars of brass. *Travels*, p. 445.

The shepherds of Ethiopia always had, and still have, queens. *Ib.* p. 473.

3. The questions she proposed were probably of the nature of riddles, such as were admired in the East, tho' they contribute but little to the advancement of real knowledge. The most extraordinary circumstance in this history is that she should travel so far from her own country, which is a thing very uncommon for princes at any time, and which appears peculiarly hazardous in the case of a woman. She must have had the greatest confidence in the fidelity of her subjects.

5. It greatly exceeded her expectations.

10. This present of gold makes it probable that her kingdom was in Africa, and not in Arabia, which is never said to have produced any gold.

11. This is supposed to have been sandal wood, which was always highly valued in the East, on account of its fragrance.

12. He must have had great plenty of this choice wood to have made such an use of it.

13 It appears from the history of Abyssinia that the queen of Sheba had a son by Solomon, and that from him was descended a race of princes who reigned a long time in that country. Also a great proportion of her subjects embraced the religion of Solomon, and retain it to this day.

15. Certain duties were probably paid by merchants on the importation of goods from distant countries.

17 These

17. These shields must have been for parade in the attendances of the guards on the king.

18. Part of the throne was covered with gold, and the rest with ivory.

20. Here again we see that making images of animals was not thought unlawful, except for idolatrous purposes.

22. This *Tarshish* must have been in the East, and not *Tartessus* in Spain, for no elephants, or apes, were ever produced in Spain, nor probably peacocks, and Mr. Bruce very well explains the reason of this three years voyage. As this voyage he says was made from *Ezi-ongaber* to *Ophir* in three years, it must have been by the regular trade winds, such as are in the Indian ocean, and no where else; and he has shewn that this was exactly the time that would be necessary to sail by means of the trade winds from the bottom of the Red sea to *Monomotapa* on the coast of Africa, opposite to *Madagascar*, which he, therefore, supposes to be the *Ophir* here mentioned; as *Tarshish* was at *Melinda* on the same coast, in about three degrees of South latitude. *Travels*, p. 433.

The words rendered *apes and peacocks* may signify some kinds of precious stones. P.

25. This annual present must have been a tribute from the conquered countries.

28. The rendering of this verse is very uncertain.

Ch. XI. 4. This part of the history is the most difficult to account for of any thing that we have yet met with, and yet the truth of it cannot be questioned, as no Israelite would have forged it. That Solomon, having

had such a father, and after shewing so much zeal for his religion as he manifested by the building of the temple, and after having had two communications from God to himself, should, in the decline of life, and merely to gratify his wives, join in their idolatrous worship. That he entertained any doubt of the truth of his own religion cannot be supposed; and the worship of any other god was manifestly inconsistent with an unquestionable principle of it. He must have flattered himself, as many persons do, that tho' he was guilty of an offence against God, it was not an unpardonable one; and that it was balanced by his merit in other respects. His first transgression was in multiplying wives, his next was in indulging them in the exercise of their idolatrous worship; but the greatest of all was his joining with them in it, tho' without any real acknowledgment of the reasonableness of it. Nothing, however, could more fully justify the strict prohibition of any connection by marriage with the neighbouring idolatrous nations. For if such a person as Solomon was drawn aside by this means, what could be expected of other persons less enlightened.

7. As Baal Peor was the god of the Moabites, as well as Chemosh, it is probable they were the same deity. This was the opinion of Jerom.

8. Milcom and Molock were evidently the same deity, the principal god of the Ammonites, and differed only in name, and particular rites of worship, from Chemosh of the Moabites, and Baal and Adonis of the other neighbouring nations; being in reality the sun; as Ashteroth, or Astarte, was the moon. Solomon not
only

only allowed his wives the worship of these gods, but built temples for them, and himself joined in that worship.

11. This was probably by some prophet.

18. They had first fled for refuge to that country as contiguous to Edom, and then went by way of Paran to Egypt.

25. We have no account of the particular trouble that this Hadad, or Resin, gave to Solomon; but the one being situated to the North, and the other to the South of the land of Canaan, they would have it in their power to disturb his peace in the latter part of his reign; when, as he had lived without war, he was ill prepared for it.

27. It does not appear that Solomon's building of Millo had any connection with the rebellion of Jeroboam. Something is probably lost from the text in this place.

28. Had he at this time given any umbrage to Solomon, he would hardly have advanced him in this manner.

30. This is not the only time in which events have been denoted by emblematical representations. We have had many similar instances before this.

36. Judah was the only tribe from which the kingdom received its denomination, tho' that of Benjamin, which was a very small tribe, was joined to it.

38. This assurance might have been sufficient to keep Jeroboam firm in his adherence to the institutions of Moses. However his defection was not so great, or extraordinary.

extraordinary, as that of Solomon, as he never worshipped any other God than Jehovah, tho' he did it in a manner that was expressly forbidden.

40. There is no reason given for the difference between Solomon and Jeroboam, besides his hearing of this interview with the prophet; and if he believed the prediction, he must have known that it was not in his power to prevent what God had appointed.

Ch. XII. 1. Notwithstanding the great number of Solomon's wives, we have no account of any son that he had besides this one, whose mother was an Ammonitess. Shechem was a central place, and therefore convenient for the purpose of a national assembly.

4. To read the preceding account of the reign of Solomon, it would not appear that there was any sufficient ground of complaint, but much ground of pride on account of it. His expences were chiefly for national purposes, and the general wealth of the country, which would enable them to pay taxes, was unexampled. The wars of David must have been much more expensive than the buildings of Solomon, and yet they excited no complaint. But the people would remember the very depressed state in which David found his country, and the height of power and wealth to which he raised it. No doubt some of the taxes of Solomon were thought unnecessary, when the occasions of laying them ceased to exist.

7. There was much wisdom in this advice. We see what excessive burdens people are brought to bear, and without complaining, when, by the civility of their rulers, they are flattered into good humour. By these arts

are many cruel tyrannies have been established. But the minds of men revolt at the appearance of insult, tho' ever so slight, of which we have an instructive example in what follows.

11. It is conjectured that the allusion in this place is not to the animal called a *scorpion*, which could never be used for flagellation; but to a *thorn*, called by the Arabs *scorpion thorn* from the pain given by it.

14. Had he made any plausible apology for the burdens he laid upon them, they would probably have borne them without much complaint. The king seems to have taxed the people at his own pleasure; and yet when they first made a king, it could not have been their intention to be governed in that arbitrary manner. But power, and especially hereditary power, easily gains strength. The prince himself, his family, all his court, and their numerous dependants, are gainers by it; while the people, who individually feel but little inconvenience, while they are taxed with art, are little disposed to complain, and cannot easily unite to resist oppression.

17. Judah was the principal tribe that remained to Rehoboam; but that of Benjamin remained also, and probably some of that of Simeon, whose inheritance was in a great measure within that of Judah.

19. This furnishes evidence of this book, or the materials out of which this part of it was composed, having been written before the dissolution of the kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians.

20. The parrallel place in 2 Chron. x. has not this verse, and it is hardly consistent with the rest of the narrative

narrative. The LXX. has, it, but then it does not mention Jeroboam appearing at the head of the congregation.

24. The tribe of Judah was nearly equal in extent and population to all the rest on the west of Jordan, and a civil war would have been the natural consequence of this division of the country, if it had not been prevented by the interposition of the prophet. His influence shews that the people in general, and no doubt the king also, retained a respect for their religion, and those who were known to be prophets. They must, however, have been sensible that the contest would have been attended with much calamity, and that the issue was uncertain; while no advantage could have accrued from it to the people, but only to the prince, who probably was not very popular.

27. He had no good reason for this apprehension, if he had any faith in the promise of God by the prophet Ahijah; and as part of his predictions had been verified, in his being made king of the ten tribes, he might have been confident that the promise of the continuance of the kingdom in his family would have been fulfilled, if he had observed the conditions on which it depended. Otherwise his reasoning is plausible enough.

28. This is so exactly the thing that was done by Aaron and the people after the giving of the law, and the divine displeasure was signified in so evident a manner in consequence of it, that it is not a little extraordinary that the same should be repeated on this occasion. They must have presumed, notwithstanding all that had taken place before, that while they worshipped no other
than

than the true God, it could not be of much consequence whether they complied with the *form* prescribed for that worship or not ; and that tho' it was an offence, it was not a very heinous one. Thus, however, men daily reconcile themselves to many practices which they will acknowledge to be wrong; and therefore, tho' we wonder at it when the case is not our own, it is not really incredible. The sacrificing in high places was likewise forbidden, and yet was practised by almost all the pious kings of Judah.

29. These places were near to the extremities of the kingdom. Dan had been the place of the teraphim of Micah, and Bethel was regarded as a sacred place after God had appeared to Jacob near it.

31. He made use other places of worship in elevated situations in different parts of the country. There were, no doubt, Levites who would have served him in the capacity of priests, tho' on this revolution many of them appear to have left the country to go to Judah. But Jeroboam probably chose to employ other persons, to relieve his people from the burden of paying tythes ; tho' nothing is said of this, and the worship of the heathens was not on the whole less expensive than that which was conducted according to the institutions of Moses. Jeroboam began with establishing two places of worship instead of one ; and probably daily sacrifices were kept up in both. But we have no distinct account of the worship at Dan or Bethel.

32. This was another departure from the institutions of Moses, making the feast of tabernacles a month later than was appointed in his writings. It is probable,
however,

however, from this circumstance, that Jeroboam had a ritual much resembling that of Moses, and that he did not do much more than change the place and the times of the national worship.

The altar which is in Bethel. MSS.

34. These evident marks of the divine interposition and displeasure, especially that which affected Jeroboam's person, must, one would have thought, have diverted him from his purpose. But, like Pharaoh, when he had recovered from his consternation, he persisted in his resolution.

Ch. XIII. 1. Who this prophet was is very uncertain. It appears, however, that there was no want of prophets in this time of degeneracy.

2. This is the first time that the name of any person to be born at a distant time is mentioned. The second instance is in that of *Cyrus* by *Isaiah*.

4. This solemn denunciation of the prophet appears to have been made in the presence of the king, who must have been alarmed at the time tho' the effect was transient.

9. Why these particular injunctions were laid upon him does not appear.

11. It appears from 2 Kings, xxiii, 18, that this prophet was originally of Samaria.

18. The presumption of this prophet in pretending to a communication from God, merely, as it seems, for the sake of the society of the other prophet, is not a little extraordinary.

19. He had no suspicion of the other prophet imposing upon him; and he might think that an order of such

a nature as this might have been revoked, but he ought not to have taken the word of any stranger for it.

20. *Whom he had brought back*, as the same words are rendered v. 23, K.

22. He must have been particularly mortified in delivering such a message, which convicted himself of a lie.

24. Not far from Bethel there was a wood or forest, out of which came the two bears that destroyed those who insulted the prophet Elisha, 2 Kings ii, 24. This lion might come from the same place.

28. It was evident from the lion having done nothing more than killing the prophet, without tearing the body, or meddling with the ass, and yet continuing at the same place, that he had acted by some extraordinary impulse. He also did not meddle with any other person who came the same way, or with the other prophet who took up the body.

Ch. XIV. 2. He could not but have faith in the prophet who had foretold that he would be king of Israel; but knowing how displeasing his conduct must have been, he did not wish him to know that it was *he* that applied to him.

3. Her present was suitable to a woman of ordinary condition.

10. The true meaning of the phrase here rendered *shut up and left* is not clear. It seems to have been a proverbial expression, to denote persons of every rank, perhaps all that were in the houses, or in the fields. But it may perhaps admit of illustration from the frequent conduct of princes in the East, who after supplant-

ing a reigning family, confine some of it, while others make their escape. In this case, however, it is intimated that divine vengeance would overtake even these.

12. This was to be a sign that the rest of the prediction would have its accomplishment.

13. Of what age was this son of Jeroboam, and what he had done to shew a good disposition, is not said. He might have expressed some disapprobation of what his father had done with respect to religion.

14. *But when? Even now, P.*

Here is an instance of the *present time* being used to express *certainty*. The house of Jeroboam was not cut off *that day*; but the event was as certain as if it had taken place immediately. This explains our Saviour's saying to the thief on the cross, *This day shalt thou be with me in paradise*. But the Chaldee and Arabic both have *They that are now living, and they that will be born*. Kimchi reads, *What is that which will now happen, to that which will come hereafter*; signifying that the present calamity would be far less than the future.

15. They will be in perpetual commotion by civil and foreign wars. This awful prediction was accomplished by the Assyrians, but at a considerable distance of time. The worship in the groves here alluded to, was, no doubt, something of a more heinous nature than the worship of the golden calves, which were intended to represent the attributes of the true God. In the Arabic it is *another god besides Jehovah*. With a little alteration it will be *Ashteroth*, or *Astarte*, who was worshipped by all the neighbouring nations.

17 This

17. This was a city in the tribe of Manasseh, famous in the time of Joshua, Ch. xii, 24 ; and thither Jeroboam had removed from Shechem.

18. It is not said in what manner Jeroboam received this message of the prophet. Had he expressed any indignation against him on that account, it would probably have been mentioned.

21. There is probably some mistake in this number; as he is said to have been a young man when he took the advice of other young men ; and it can hardly be thought that Solomon married an Ammonitish woman before he was king. For this must have been with the approbation of his father. And since Solomon reigned forty years, Rehoboam must on this supposition, have been born a year before his accession. Some think the number was originally twenty one.

22. In the first three years Rehoboam walked in the ways of David and Solomon.

23. The worship of the groves was undoubtedly that of some heathen deity, to whom they erected temples, or altars, in groves; and in those groves, or the precincts of the temples, the most abominable rites were practised, even sodomitical ones, as part of the worship. These were removed by Aza when he put down idolatry, Ch. xv, 12. Josiah did the same, 2 Kings, xxiii, 7

25. This Sefac is supposed to have been the same with the Sesostris of Herodotus, a great Egyptian king and conqueror. As he is not said to have injured Jeroboam, who had been in Egypt, it is supposed that he might have been excited to this invasion of Judah by him.

29. It is evident that records were kept of all public transactions, and that from those larger accounts this short one was extracted.

30. Rehoboam was forbidden to make war on the ten tribes on account of their revolt; but the two kings being at variance, some degree of hostility was almost unavoidable, tho' no great battle might be fought, and no conquest might be made on either side.

Ch. XV. 2. He began to reign in some part of Jeroboam's eighteenth year, and died in the twentieth, which in the Hebrew mode of reckoning would be called three years. Thus Afa might begin to reign in the same twentieth year of Jeroboam, as in v. 9. In 2 Ch. xiii, 2, she is called *Michajah the daughter of Uriah*. Perhaps Maachah was the grandmother.

6. The Syriac and Arabic as well as some MSS have *between Abijah and Jeroboam*, which was probably the original reading.

7. In 2 Ch. xiii, 22, they are said to be written in the book of the prophet Iddo.

12. This must have been a heathenish practice, well known to the public. To remove private sodomy, so as to prevent the practice of it throughout the kingdom, was not in his power. Besides, it is connected with the account of his removing the idols which his father had made.

13. He deprived her of the rank and privileges of the *queen mother*, which in all the Eastern countries is very considerable. From the terms made use of to denote this idol, it was probably of a nature peculiarly abominable, perhaps the same with *Priapus*, i. e. *Baal Peor*.

14 The

14. The sacrificing to Jehovah in high places was so authorized by ancient custom, that the prohibition of it was ineffectual to prevent it. It was practiced, and to appearance without censure, in all the time of Samuel and David.

15. He probably replaced many of the things that Sefac had taken.

17. Rama was in the tribe of Benjamin.

20. This was the northern part of the kingdom of Israel, next to Damascus.

22. He enlarged and fortified these places.

23. There are more particulars of the reign of Aśa in the book of Chronicles.

27. Gibeon was a city in the tribe of Dan, Josh. xix, 44, and given to the Levites, Ch. xxi, 23.

29. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy of Ahijah, Ch. xiv, 12.

Ch. XVI. 1 This prophet lived towards the close of the reign of Jehosaphat, 2 Ch. xix, 1. xx, 34. It is evident that there was no failure in the succession of prophets during all the reigns of the kings, and till some time after the return from the Babylonish captivity; from which may be inferred the attention of God to his people, notwithstanding their rejection of his immediate government, and their frequent apostacies; and that his eye is upon them still, and no doubt for good.

4. This was the very sentence pronounced on the posterity of Jeroboam; and being, no doubt, well known, it might have served for a warning to future kings.

7. Place this verse after v. 4. Ho.

He killed not Jeroboam himself, but some of his posterity; and tho' this judgment on the house of Jeroboam was fore-ordained by God, Baasha was justly punished for executing it, as he did it to gratify his own ambition.

12. There was a remarkable similarity between both the offences and the punishment of Jeroboam and Baasha. They ~~exactly~~ verified the declaration of God from the mount Sinai. Ex. xx, 5, viz. that he visited the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate him.

15. This place which they had been besieging many years before, when Baasha slew Nadab (Ch. xv. 27—11) was now invested again.

22. Tibni was probably defeated and slain.

23. These twelve years are reckoned from the beginning of the reign of Omri, in the twenty seventh of Aza, from which time the contest continued between Omri and Tibni till the thirty first year of Aza, in which Tibni died; after which Omri was acknowledged by all the people.

24. The king's house in Tirza being burned, he removed his residence to Samaria, and there it continued till the captivity by the Assyrians.

25. He probably introduced the worship of foreign deities, which was more fully established by his son Ahab, who, no doubt, with the approbation of his father, married Jezebel, the daughter of the king of Tyre. In Mic. vi, 16, mention is made of *the statutes of Omri*, which, whatever they were, were, no doubt, favourable to idolatry.

33 Ahab,

33. Ahab fully established the public worship of Baal, and probably also that of Ashteroth, or Astarte. At least he planted a grove, as well as built a temple, for the purpose of idolatrous worship ; which was going far beyond what any of the former kings of Israel had done.

34. In this idolatrous reign no regard was paid to the predictions of former prophets. Either through ignorance, or contempt of them, this man rebuilt Jericho: But the prediction was verified in all its parts, his first born son dying when he laid the foundation of the city; and his youngest son when he set up the gates of it.

This new city was probably on the foundation of the old one, for another city, built probably in that neighbourhood, had been called *Jericho*. For there David bade the messengers he sent to Nahum to stay till their beards were grown ; unless by Jericho we understand the territory where that city had stood.

Ch. XVII. 1. Not that he had any power over the atmosphere ; but he was authorized to announce the will of God with respect to it, and what he announced would come to pass.

2. The king was, no doubt, highly provoked at this threatening language ; and to avoid the effects of his anger, the prophet was directed to conceal himself.

3. This is thought to be the same brook that is called Kana, Josh. xvi, 8—xvii, 9. There were probably several small brooks running into the river Jordan, which in the summer were dry.

4. Instead of *ravens* some suppose that the word so rendered is the name of a neighbouring people, the *Or-*

him, and in that part of the country there was a town called *Aorabi*, or *Orbo*.

6. It was, no doubt, in the power of God to support the prophet without food ; but his interposition was equally manifest in causing it to be brought to him by ravens.

7. Probably *after a year*, as this phrase often signifies.

9. This was between Tyre and Sidon, inhabited by Gentiles.

12. This woman, tho' a heathen, respected the God of Israel, and perhaps knew by his dress that Elijah was one of the prophets. *Two* often signifies a *few*, Is. xvii 6 ; Jer. iii, 14. The *barrels* here mentioned were earthen jars, which are used in the East to preserve corn from the worms.

15. She must have had intire faith in what he told her, to give him any part of her small stock of provisions.

16. This was a continued miracle of a peculiar kind, of which we have had no example before. The most like to it was the dayly production of manna in the wilderness.

18. Here we have another example of the apprehension of danger from the presence of superior beings, assent to punish men for their sins

22. This is the first miracle of the kind upon record. But the sovereign giver of life can either take it away, or restore it, whenever he pleases.

24. She must have believed this before ; but this
pleasing

pleasing event, evidently miraculous, had confirmed her faith.

28. It is probable from Hos. x, 5, and the translation of the LXX, that these images were of the female sex, such as were held in the highest veneration by the Egyptians among whom Jeroboam had resided.

Ch. XVIII. 1. This might be the third year after the flight of Elijah; since it might not take place till some time after the denunciation; Ahab at first probably ascribing the failure of rain to some natural cause. The drought, therefore, might continue *three years and six months*, as it is said to have done, Luke iv, 25. and James v. 7.

4. *Five hundred*, MSS. LXX.

These must have been persons living in a community for the purpose of religious exercises and instruction, and Obadiah must have had great wealth, and great prudence, to have acted as he did; especially if his attachment to his religion was known, as it probably was, to the king and queen.

10. Ahab must have had great influence in the neighbouring countries, as well as great indignation against Elijah, to have this strict inquiry made after him.

14. As he had been miraculously concealed from Ahab before, Obadiah was apprehensive that he might be so again; in which case he would be punished for not securing him.

17. Ahab must, surely, have known, that neither Elijah, nor any other man, had power to produce, or to prevent rain; but he might think that the judgment

was inflicted in consequence of his prayers, or imprecations, the influence of which all the heathens thought to be very great.

19. The prophets of the groves are here distinguished from those of Baal, and it is probable, as Mr. Selden and others have supposed, that these were the prophets or priests of Astarte.

21. It is evident that the people were by no means universally idolaters; but some of them inclined to one worship and others to another.

24. There could not have been a fairer proposal than this, and to appearance it was very unfavourable to Elijah. He was a single person, and the priests of Baal a great number, in great favour with the king, and the majority of the people. In these circumstances it was not possible for him to succeed but by an unquestionable miracle. No artifice could have been employed by him.

28. No doubt they had some expectation that their god would interfere on this occasion, and they had recourse to these methods in order to attract his notice, by shewing their zeal in his cause. Various kinds of austerities were common in the heathen worship. They probably danced round the altar, for that was generally practised, but did not jump upon it; and while they were employed in this manner, Elijah, confident of the inefficacy of all their endeavours, and certain of his own success, derided them in the sarcastic manner that is here mentioned.

29. Here the dancing, accompanied probably with music, and hymns, in honour of Baal, is called *prophesying*.

30. This

30. This was, no doubt, one of the high places in which an altar had formerly been erected to the true God.

35. Nothing could have been more unexceptionable than this proceeding. The priests of Baal had the choice of the victims, and he took what they left him ; and not only applied no fire, but ordered the altar and every thing about it to be thoroughly drenched with water, that the miracle of the sacrifice being burned by fire from heaven might be the more evident.

40. So evident a miracle could not but have this effect, whatever had been the previous prejudices of the people, and they were then prepared to do whatever Elijah should direct ; and his orders were to carry into instant execution, the laws of Moses respecting idolaters. They were to be put to death without mercy. Whether the king concurred in this does not appear.

44. Mr. Bruce says that before the inundation of the Nile the mornings in Abyssinia are clear, and the sun shines bright ; but that about nine a cloud, seemingly about four feet broad, appears in the East, violently whirling round, as if upon an axis ; being arrived near the zenith it first abates of its motion, then extends itself, and seems to call up vapours from opposite quarters, which rush against each other, and heavy rain follows.

45. This sudden rain, after the miraculous burning of Elijah's sacrifice, and his prayer, could not but have its proper effect at the time upon Ahab himself, as well as upon the people who were present. That it had appears from his making no opposition to the orders of
Elijah

Elijah. In return, the prophet shewed him the respect that was due to him as his sovereign, by running before his chariot till he came to the gate of the city ; doing this as it should seem, by a divine impulse, as it is said *the hand of the Lord was upon him*. He might not chuse to go into the city on account of Jezebel, whom he did not wish to insult, and whose resentment he might dread.

Ch. XIX. 2. The transactions at Carmel, when related to Jezebel, affected her in a very unpleasant manner. She felt no sentiments but those of rage and revenge, which it was not in the power of the king to controul.

4. He seemed to have been bent on abandoning his country, and going where no person could find him ; but he rather wished to die, having, as probably was his meaning in what he said, lived as long as his ancestors.

8. His distance from Horeb was not more than five days journey ; but, perhaps to prevent discovery, he seems to have concealed himself by travelling chiefly in the night. This has the appearance of a fast of forty days, like that of Moses and of Jesus afterwards.

13. In his cave was in the mountain, and he was probably only required to stand at the mouth of it, for when, after the tempest, the earthquake, and the fire, he heard the still small voice, he only stood at the entrance of the cave to attend to it ; and the voice evidently proceeded from the Supreme Being himself.

15. He does not appear to have actually anointed Hazeel. He only declared the divine appointment of him.

him to be king; nor indeed do we know that this was done by himself in person. He did not himself anoint Jehu, but Elisha who succeeded him; nor was there, as far as appears, any actual anointing of Elisha. The phrase seems to denote nothing more than a solemn and authoritative appointment to an office, which was usually done by the ceremony of anointing.

17. These three persons seem to have been intended to punish the people of Israel for their unworthy treatment of Elijah, the two former by the sword, and Elisha by denouncing divine judgments.

18. There were many more who adhered to the worship of the true God than Elijah had imagined. And the same we may hope to be the case in other degenerate times, true piety and virtue chusing retirement and obscurity.

19. The prophets appear to have worn a particular dress; and his putting this on Elisha was a sufficient indication of his future character, equivalent to the anointing of him.

20. He did not require him to go without his own consent.

Ch. XX. 1. Benhadad signifies *the son of Hadad*. But tho' there was a Hadad of the seed royal of Edom, who fled into Egypt when David slew the males of that country, and who returned, and gave trouble to Solomon, it is by no means probable that he became king of Syria. The same language being spoken in all these neighbouring countries, there might be many names common to them all. The father of this king had taken several cities from the Israelites, v. 34, Ch. xv, 20, and

20, and at this time it is evident that this kingdom of Syria, tho' it had been conquered by David, was become very powerful, or there could not have been thirty two kings subjected to its sovereign. The conquered countries may be presumed to have been equal in extent to Palestine, which had thirty one kings in the time of Joshua. At this time it is evident there could not have been any great Assyrian empire, ~~at least~~ extending Westward, such as arose afterwards, comprehending the whole of Syria, as well as many countries to the East, and the South, the capital of it being Nineveh.

4. He was willing to be his vassal, and to pay tribute for his kingdom.

6. This was much more than Ahab had promised.

11. It is probable that this extension of the Syrian dominions had been made by this Benhadad himself, his behaviour being that of an insolent conqueror ; but Ahab, roused to opposition, made a proper reply.

12. He seems to have been near to the city when he sent the above message.

13. If this message from God had been delivered before the answer of Ahab to the insolent demands of Benhadad, it will account for the spirit of the reply.

14. The phrase *young men* often signifies *servants*. These were probably persons who had never been trained to war, but employed in menial offices ; and yet by them the prophet promises deliverance from the great army of the Syrians.

15. If this was all the force that he could raise, the people must have been in great dread of the Syrians ; and Benhadad, knowing this, would hold Ahab in great contempt.

contempt. It is evident from Ahab being governed by the prophet, that he was convinced of the superior power of his own God ; and it is observable that nothing is said of his *idolatry*, tho' there is of his injustice, after the triumph of Elijah over the priests of Baal.

20. This great victory by so inconsiderable a force, very much resembles that of Gideon, and it must have confirmed Ahab and his people in the belief of the superiority of their God to those of the Syrians.

23. It was the opinion of all the heathens, that there were gods not only of particular districts, and of particular countries, but also of hills and rivers, and even single hills, and single rivers, and that their power did not extend beyond their proper provinces. And because Samaria was situated in a hilly country, the Syrians imagined that the God of Israel had no power in the plain.

24. They might naturally think that these tributary kings would not fight with the same spirit as their own people.'

26. This was in the tribe of Asher, probably one that Benhadad's father had taken from the kings of Israel ; and near to it was the plain of Galilee, where he intended to give battle.

25. They were probably taken by surprize, as the Midianites were by Gideon ; and in a hasty flight, and much crouding, many might be trampled to death, as also by mistaking friends for enemies, especially as it was in the night.

30. *A burning wind fell.* K.

31. Tho' David and other Hebrew conquerors exercised greater severities than is usually practised by christians, they might be merciful compared with other conquerors of those times. Had David when he conquered Syria behaved as many conquerors did, the Syrians would not have been so powerful as they now were.

32. Ahab, no doubt, hoped to make a friend of Ben-hadad; not considering ~~that~~ ~~who~~ who had behaved with so much insolence, and who, without any provocation had endeavoured to do him so much injury, could never be thoroughly reconciled. He ought, therefore, to have put it out of his power to injure him again.

34. It is uncertain what is meant by the word that is rendered *street* in this place. It certainly implies that the Israelites should have the privilege of residing in Damascus, and perhaps that of having some fortress or place of safety, there.

42. As the victory was God's, Ahab should not have disposed of his prisoners without consulting the prophet who had assured him of the victory. He had been committing the very fault which he had condemned in another, and he seems to have been sensible of it.

Ch. XXI. 4. It was natural for Ahab to wish to get this piece of ground, which was so near to his own house, and he made a fair proposal to the owner; but it was as natural for Naboth to be unwilling to part with it. It is evident, however, that Ahab, tho' exceedingly displeased, did not of himself intend to do any injustice, and, that tho' with reluctance, he submitted to the disappointment; which shews that the kings of Israel did not govern arbitrarily, but conformed to the known laws, as well as their subjects.

8. It

8. It is no uncommon thing for men to be persuaded by others to do what they would never have done of themselves, especially when it is to shew their spirit or power. Ahab was probably told that he was no king if he could not command so trifling a gratification as this, and that Naboth in refusing to sell his field on such reasonable terms, deserved to lose it. His consent, however, to the murder and injustice, made the act his own.

9.—i. e. bring him to his trial. P.

For what purpose this fast was appointed does not appear. We may, however, infer from it, that extraordinary acts of religion, probably with a view to implore the divine mercy in calamitous times, were not uncommon. Naboth was probably appointed to attend to the sacrifices that were made on the occasion, and no doubt the worship was directed to the true God.

10. By the law of Moses (Lev. xxiv, 16) a blasphemer was to be stoned. It is evident, therefore, that in this part of his life Ahab professed obedience to that law, and was a worshipper of the true God; and this change in his conduct must have been produced by the miracles of Elijah. By blasphemy against the king, was no doubt, meant some act of treason, in consequence of which his estate was perhaps forfeited to the king.

13. The evidence of two witnesses was necessary to putting any person to death.

25. This had been his general character and conduct, and his offences were not expiated by his partial reformation. Whether chargeable with idolatry or not, he was guilty of manifest injustice and murder.

27. His acquiescence in the sentence pronounced by the prophet, shews his belief in his divine mission.

29. Tho' he considered Elijah as his enemy, because he had denounced the judgments of God against him, he was far from offering him any violence. On the contrary he discovered every mark of sorrow and contrition for what he had done ; dreading, no doubt, the judgment which the prophet had announced.

Ch. XXII. 1. The war breaking out with Syria so soon, shews the weakness of Ahab in sparing Benhadad when he had him in his power.

2. The son of Jehosaphat had married the daughter of Ahab, 2 Ch. xviii, 1—2 Kings, viii, 18.

3. He had not restored all the cities that had been taken from the Israelites according to his promise.

6. This is another evidence of the return of Ahab to the true religion. Four hundred prophets probably formed several of their schools or communities, which could not have been concealed. That they pretended to prophecy in the name of Jehovah is evident, tho' they wished to recommend themselves to Ahab by pleasing predictions ; and they probably thought there was little danger of his want of success against an enemy he had conquered before, when his forces were inconsiderable, and now he had the assistance of so pious a prince as Jehosaphat.

7. He might suspect from the manner in which they delivered their prophecies, that what they said was not from any divine impulse, but of themselves.

8. He did not object to the truth of his predictions, but was offended because they were not pleasing to him.

This

This is an ingenuous acknowledgment of a very natural and common sentiment.

11. Of such symbolical representations of future events, we have several instances in the writings of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.

15. This he must have said ironically, evidently meaning the contrary to what he said.

17. In this manner he intimated that the kingdom would soon be deprived of its king, and so it appears to have been understood by Ahab.

23. It was probably in a vision that Micajah saw this representation.

25. This he might do to hide himself, when he was apprehensive of being seized as a false prophet.

26. This looks as if he had been in custody before.

29. Jehosaphat seems not to have known which of these prophets spoke the truth, and was willing to concur with Ahab as far as he could.

34. He had put on armour; but the arrow entered at some of the junctures, and reached a vital part.

36. It does not appear which side had the victory. They rather seem to have fought with equal advantage.

38. It was not the blood of Ahab himself, but that of Joram his grandson, that the dogs licked in the fields of Naboth, 2 Kings, ix, 25; but this is called the blood of Ahab.

39. This house was probably inlaid, or some way ornamented, with ivory.

43. The most pious of the kings of Judah till the reign of Hezekiah, permitted the worship of God in high places.

46. These must have appertained to some heathen worship, which had escaped the search of Asa.

48. By *ships of Tarshish* may be meant such ships as were fitted up for long voyages, like that to Tartessus in Spain. But Mr. Bruce with great probability, places this Tarshish, as well as Ophir, in Africa.

49. *And Jehosaphat consented.* CONJ. HO.

There is probably some error in the text of this place. For it appears from ~~Ch. xx~~ 35, that Jehosaphat did join with Ahaziah in building a fleet at Eziongeber. But he might have done this before this destruction of the ships. For according to the account in the Book of Chronicles, he was previously threatened with this for joining with the king of Israel; so that afterwards he might decline any farther connection with him, and carry on the commerce on his own account.

51. It was only a part of two years. Many other chronological difficulties are solved by supposing that any part of a year, at the beginning or end of it, in the account of the reigns of kings, is called a whole year, when mention is made of the length of their reigns.

The end of the first volume.